

Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course

Bhavachakra: The Wheel of Becoming

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Today we are going to talk about one of the most important symbols in Asian history, a symbol most known in the Buddhist traditions, but that has some relevance in all Asian philosophy. In fact, it is even present in western traditions, but under different faces and names. Commonly, publicly, this symbol is called the Wheel of Samsara, the Wheel of Life, the Wheel of Suffering, the Wheel of Destiny, etc. It has many names, but the real name is **भावचक्र Bhavachakra**. It is important for anyone that is very serious about their spiritual progress to understand that real name and what it implies, because to say “the Wheel of Samsara,” or “the wheel of cyclic existence,” or “the wheel of suffering” is actually inaccurate. Those names fail to point out the primary message of this important symbol.



Many people say that Buddha Shakyamuni invented this symbol as part of the teachings he gave around 2,500 years ago. Yet, he stated,

"I have seen an ancient Path, an ancient road traversed by the rightly enlightened ones of former times." - Buddhism. Samyutta Nikaya ii.106

Therefore, the Buddha Shakyamuni did not invent anything. He only pointed out what had been lost and forgotten. Thus, the teaching of the Bhavachakra is much more ancient even than "Buddhism," and it has great significance for us.

In this tradition, which we call the Gnostic tradition, we study the roots of all ancient religions, and we can see all religions in this symbol, that all religions correspond to it, that it is an universal symbol. It expresses universal truths, not religious doctrines, but truths, reality. In fact, the name Bhavachakra has a very important bearing on the concept or understanding of what is reality.

The first part of the word is भव **Bhava**, which means "attitude, state, nature," not nature outside with trees, plants, and animals, but the nature of a thing, its innate, intrinsic, inherent nature. The word

Bhava comes from भू bhū, "to become." So, bhava implies an attitude or state of being that is "becoming" or in constant change.

The second part of Bhavachakra is चक्र **chakra**, which means "wheel."

Therefore, Bhavachakra means "Wheel of Becoming."

This symbol can be found inside the antechamber or the foyer of every Tibetan Buddhist temple in the world, and in many other temples, especially Mahayana temples such as in China, Japan, Korea, and countries like this; we can find variations of this teaching everywhere. It is commonly painted on a wall very big—as big as they have room for—with the purpose of reminding the public of the fundamentals of the psychological and philosophical doctrine that the Buddha taught. In other words, this symbol is not there to make people believe something; it is not there to scare people. It is there to remind people of its practical meaning, as a way for the lay people who are not yet in the higher aspects of the teaching to remember what they are learning and how it affects their personal lives. It is not their to make them believe and follow, or to make them loyal or to follow the commands given by their instructors. Instead, it is to remind them of the fundamental principles that affect their daily lives.

Yama

Most representations of Bhavachakra show a wrathful being, a ferocious and scary creature that holds in his grasp a great wheel. The word chakra is Sanskrit for "wheel," something that rotates, repeats, a cycle, a flow, a movement of forces.

He has a terrifying appearance, but he is a [God](#), not a demon. Different religions explain this creature in different ways. Commonly, it is named यम **Yama**, who is said to be the [God](#) of death, that aspect of divinity that manages the process of completion of cycles. When our body dies, there are divinities that are responsible for managing those processes for us. They are not devils or [demons](#). They are divinities.



Yama appears wrathful, intense, because of the great intensity in which he has to focus and work; in his arms are every existing type of being. Imagine the responsibility of holding in your hands everything that lives. How much ferocious intensity must you have in your concentration, in your presence, in your compassion for all of the beings that rely on you? That is what he represents. His open eyes see everything; moreover, he has a third eye which represents his spiritual insight, his vision of the true nature of existence. He comprehends the nature of reality. His five skulls on his head represent that all things are impermanent. The Buddhist philosophy presents that we are a combination of five aggregates (skandhas), five aspects of matter and energy that allow us to be. Those five aggregates are empty of inherent existence. That is why they are presented here as skulls. They are subject to death, which is his domain.

Beside his head is a cloud filled with [bodhisattvas](#). These images have variety, but you always see [bodhisattvas](#) in the clouds and heavens, and you see a moon. In Buddhism, the moon represents the potential for liberation. The moon is a positive symbol. It is a celestial body that reflects the light of the sun and provides light in the darkness. That symbol represents the power of Christ (to use a Greek term), the power of Chenresig, Avalokitesvara, Quan Yin. The moon represents the power of a celestial divinity who is bringing light to the darkness to illuminate the path for those who wish to escape suffering. The [bodhisattvas](#) are those who point the way.

The Wheel

The circle or wheel, which is the main point of the image, has many parts. I will briefly explain the commonly known meanings of these aspects, but that is not the purpose of today's lecture. First, I am going to explain the common level, the public level for those who are not familiar with it. I am doing it to prepare you to go deeper, because the real importance of the symbol is only found when you go beyond the superficial meanings.

The outermost ring of this wheel has twelve parts, and these are called निदान *nidanas* (literally, "causes"). There are twelve *nidanas*. These represent the causality of action. Every action puts in motion a chain of events. That ring of twelve *nidanas* represents the chain of causality, and explain why we are trapped in suffering. In the Buddhist teachings, this is called **pratityasamutpada**, which is difficult to translate into English; we do not have words that convey its precise meaning, but the most commonly used word nowadays is interdependence, or dependent origination, which basically states,

"This is, because that is.

This is not, because that is not.

This ceases to be, because that ceases to be."

It is basically stating that everything is interdependent; nothing exists separately. Everything depends on everything else, and as such this is the cause of both suffering and liberation. The twelve *nidanas* explain interconnectedness of actions and their consequences. We have explained the twelve *nidanas* in a book called [Karma is Negotiable](#). If you want to learn more about that you can read that book.

Pratityasamutpada is a very deep and profound teaching. So deep that the Buddha said,

"Who so understands the Pratityasamutpada understands the Dharma, and who so understands the Dharma understands the Pratityasamutpada."

Most people do not understand the twelve *Nidanas*, which means we do not know anything about Dharma, a Sanskrit word:

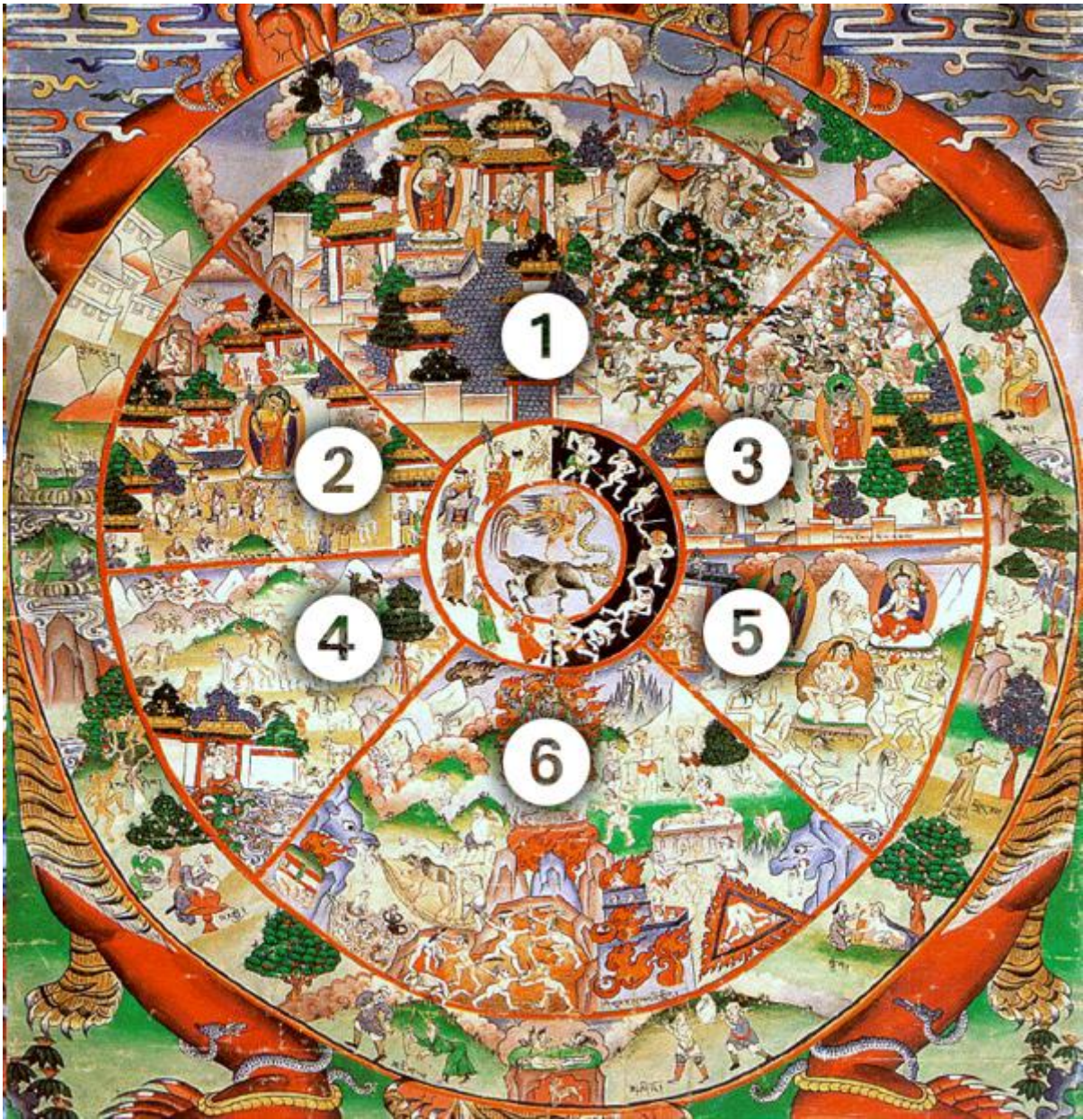
Dharma: "Law or Justice personified, righteousness, duty, merit, statue, practice, religion, observance, relating to justice or virtue, law, thing, ceremony, good works, character, propriety of conduct, morality or ethics, virtue."

In synthesis, Dharma refers to the teachings that lead one out of suffering.

You need to study Pratityasamutpada if you do not know about the twelve *nidanas* already. Today's lecture is not about that. We are going to talk about inside of those twelve links that form the outer ring of the wheel.

The Regions of Samsara

Inside the outer ring are six sections.



Exoterically, publicly, these six sections are called the realms or regions of Samsara. They are said to be worlds, literal regions or realms where various classes of beings live. The top three we can call heavens or superior types of worlds, and the bottom three we can call inferior types of worlds, hells. Strictly speaking, the bottommost region is called hell. When we look into the psychological content, you can probably agree that all of them are hell.

Inside the six regions of Samsara is depicted another ring, which has sections also. One half of that ring is light, and the other half is dark. That ring represents Karma: action and consequence. It simply presents what the bible says:

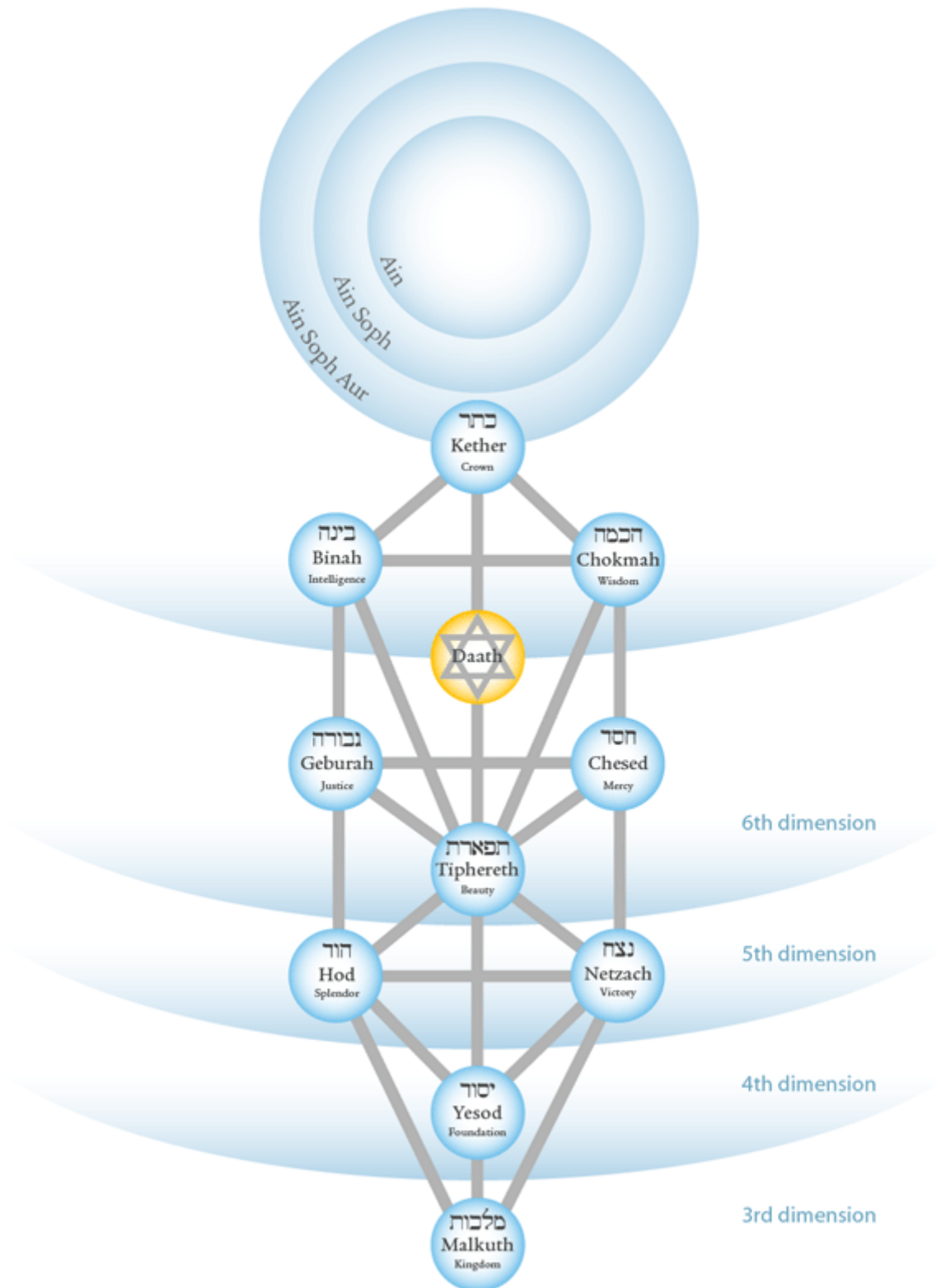
“...whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” - Galatians 6:7

Actions that produce benefit create benefit for everyone. Actions that produce harm produce harm for everyone.

Then we arrive at the centermost part, the axle, that which causes the entire wheel to rotate. In that center part, we see three animals. Those three animals are said to be a rooster, a pig (or dog), and a snake. In the public level teachings they are said to be ignorance, hate, and passion / desire.

As mentioned, most people study all of this as something primarily external, related to other beings and dimensions. But the real meaning is psychological. All of this represents the state of our mind, our own Bhava.

We study all of that in a different way as the [Tree of Life](#). In [Kabbalah](#) we study it as a series of spheres that are arranged in a pattern of triangles. The circles are called Sephiroth. They represent worlds and aspects of our psyche as well.



The Absolute

In this particular representation of the [Tree of Life](#) are three vast expansive spaces we can call the Absolute. In [Hebrew](#), it is called the Ain, the Ain Soph, and the Ain Soph Aur. In Sanskrit, it is called Shunyata (शून्यता, "nothingness"), Brahma, etc. That is the root Bhava or state of being of all things. It is the absolute essence of all things. The inherent nature of everything that exists is “emptiness.” It is a type of void, but it is not nothing. It is a void of characteristics, void of definition, void of identity; it is void of measurement of heat, cold, temperature. It is void of concept, yet it is a type of beingness beyond what we can conceptualize.

“The Abstract Absolute Space is the causa causorum of everything that is, has been, and shall be.

“The profound and joyful space is certainly the incomprehensible “Seity,” which is the ineffable, mystical root of the seven cosmos. It is the mysterious origin of all that we know as Spirit, matter, universes, suns, worlds, etc.

“That,” which is divine, the space of happiness, is the tremendous reality beyond the universe and Gods.

“That” has no dimension, yet, indeed, it is what is, what always has been, and what always will be. It is the life that intensely palpitates within each atom and within each sun.

“Let us now refer to the great ocean of the Spirit: how can we define it? Certainly, He is Brahma, who is the first differentiation or modification of “That.” The Gods and humans tremble when before “That.”

“Is “That” Spirit? Indeed, I tell you that it is not. Is “That” matter? Truly, I tell you that it is not.

“That” is the root of the Spirit and of matter, yet it is neither Spirit nor matter.

“That” transcends the laws of numbers, measurement, and weight, it transcends quantity, any side, front, behind, above, below, etc.

“That” has reality beyond thought, word, and action.

“That” is not of time and it is beyond silence and sound, even beyond the ears to perceive it.

“That” is the immutable within a profound, divine abstraction. It is light that has never been created by any [God](#), nor by any human. “That” is what has no name.

“Brahma is Spirit; yet “That” is not Spirit. The Absolute, the Unmanifested One, is uncreated light.” - Samael Aun Weor, [Cosmic Teachings of a Lama](#)

The understanding of Shunyata or the Absolute cannot be reached by the intellect. That is impossible. In order to comprehend the nature of the Absolute or existence itself it is only possible to do that with an awakened [Consciousness](#), to perceive it for oneself. And to reach that type of perception, you have to become liberated from anything that binds you to deluded perception: your sense of self, your sense that your body is you, your name, your thoughts, your desires, your longings, your fears: everything has to be abandoned. You retreat back into the core, innermost part that makes you a creature: your beingness, which is a form of pure perception that is absolutely unconditioned and free from any form of any kind of limitation, and from that perspective, you then can see the Absolute.

Why is this important?

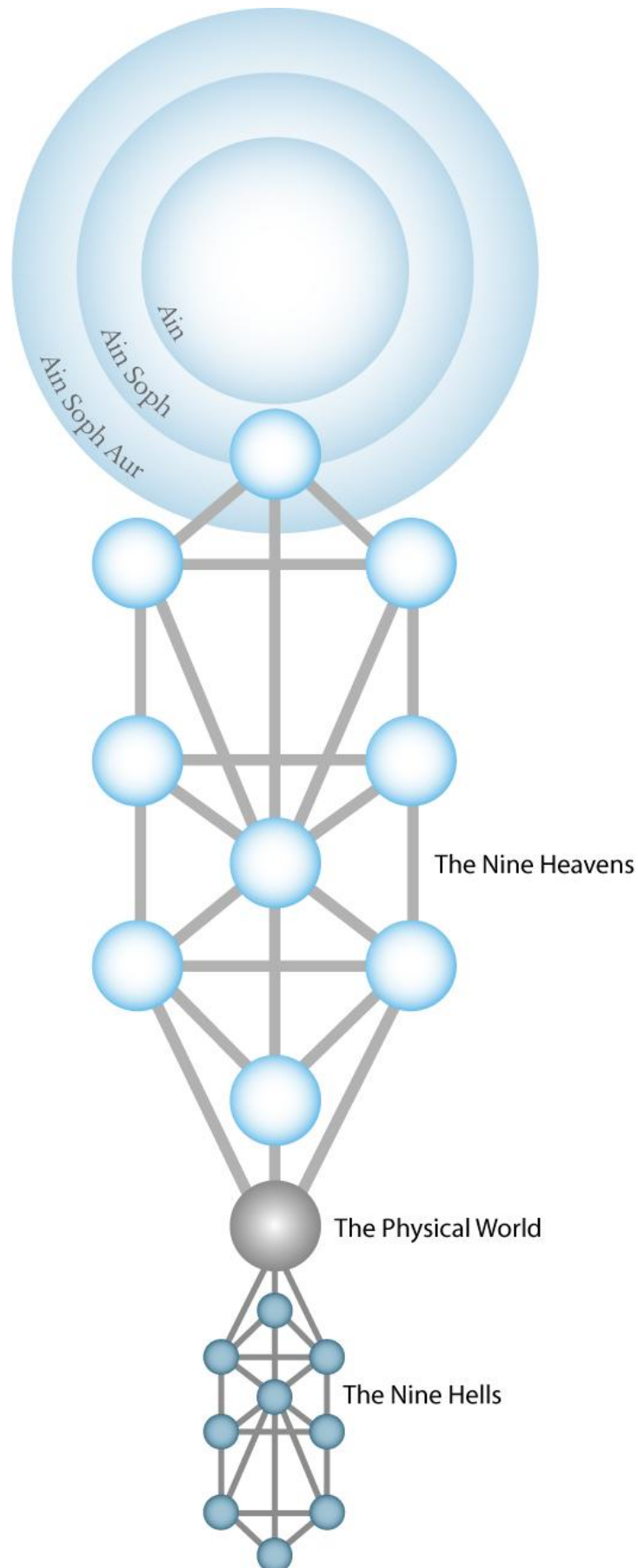
“The Absolute Abstract Space, the Universal Spirit of Life, is absolute happiness, supreme peace, and abundance.” - Samael Aun Weor

“The Absolute is life free in its motion; it is the Supreme Reality, the Abstract Space that only expresses itself as Absolute Abstract Motion, happiness without limits, complete omniscience. The Absolute is Uncreated Light and perfect plenitude, absolute happiness, life free in its motion, life without conditions, without limits...

“Gods and humans are submitted to the suffering of conditioned life. Notwithstanding, in the Absolute we go beyond karma and the gods, beyond the law. The mind and the individual [Consciousness](#) are only good for mortifying our lives. In the Absolute we do not have an individual mind or individual [Consciousness](#); there, we are the unconditioned, free and absolutely happy Being. The Absolute is life free in its movement, without conditions, limitless, without the mortifying fear of the law, life beyond spirit and matter, beyond karma and suffering, beyond thought, word and action, beyond silence and sound, beyond forms. The Absolute is abstract, absolute space, abstract absolute movement, absolute freedom, without conditions, without restrictions, absolute omniscience and absolute happiness.” - Samael Aun Weor, [The Major Mysteries](#)

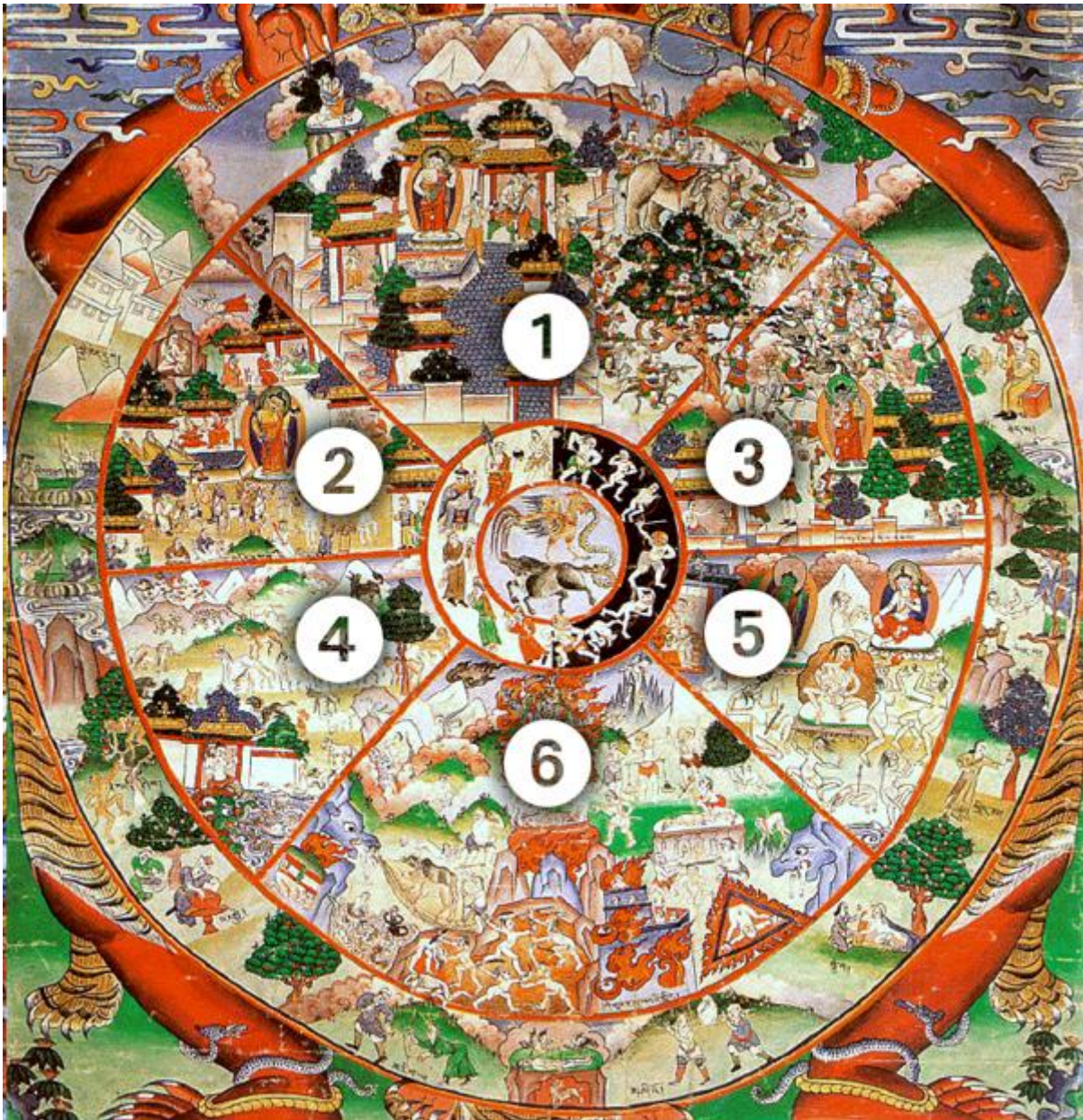
Let me tell you something. The knowledge of reality—the Absolute—and the experience of it, is terrifying to the [ego](#), to the personality, to our sense of self. That is partly why Yama, the creature that holds the wheel, has a ferocious aspect; he knows what reality is, and his knowledge is represented by the five skulls, a demonstration of the impermanence of compounded things.

The [Tree of Life](#) shows us levels of existence. At the topmost portion of this graphic we see the Absolute, the emptiness from which existence emerges. On the [Tree of Life](#), manifested existence is shown as a series of Sephiroth, arranged in triangles. There is an upper triangle, a middle triangle, and a lower triangle, and a single sphere by itself, and then below, a reflection of the whole structure. That single sphere by itself is the physical world. The lower part that hangs below it are the hells, the inferior worlds.



Among all those levels abide all sentient beings, each living in the realm that corresponds to their level of being: their psychological, spiritual level. The gods live in the heavens because they are pure enough to exist there. The [demons](#) are in hell because the weight of their psyche keeps them there. We are here in this world, caught in the middle, because of our psychological state: our level of Being, our bhava.

The Bhavachakra represents this with six symbolic "worlds."



1. Gods (Sanskrit: Devas)
2. Demi-gods (Sanskrit: Asura)
3. Humans (Sanskrit: Manuṣya)
4. Animals (Sanskrit: Tiryagyoni)
5. Hungry ghosts (Sanskrit: Preta)
6. Hells (Sanskrit: Naraka)

Sometimes, the realms of the gods and demigods are considered one realm.

So, these two images, these two symbols—the Bhavachakra and the [Tree of Life](#)—represent the many levels of Being, the symbolism of this can be interpreted in many ways. They are very deep and very profound. They are not merely physical, literal.

The Outer Meaning

The first level of meaning is the public level; what we hear about Heavens and Hells, what is outside of us and where we fit into the universe. This is the most superficial and basic teaching given in religion. Every religion says there is heaven and there is hell, and we are in the middle, and what we do determines where we go when we die. This is a pretty consistent philosophical structure amongst religions. These symbols represent that. At this level of meaning, the heavens and hells are other dimensions where beings exist. We cannot see them with the physical senses, yet if we learn to use other senses we can become aware of them. Thus, the Bhavachakra can represent the world systems and dimensions throughout which exist many types of beings.

On an even more basic level, the structure and symbolism of the six realms can apply to how society functions here in the physical world. That is, the different classes of beings in the other dimensions have a sort of “reflection” here. We can see these six realms mirrored in society. There are people on this planet that have a life that is pretty much what we would call “heaven.” They have everything they want, and everything we want and do not have. We can relate them to the realm of the “gods.” Yes,

they are “gods” in this materialistic society. Those are people who have everything humanity desires: money, power, fame, leisure, health, beauty, respect, admiration. People do not have those things, and people want them. So, from this point of view, people view the wealthy and the celebrities as “gods.” We are not saying that these people are spiritual gods, or that their inner Beings are gods—no. We are saying that from the point of view of society, humanity views the wealthy and the celebrities as gods, and worship them as such. In fact, on one occasion, a “highly educated” woman told me in all seriousness that most celebrities are “great [bodhisattvas](#), angels” who are here to help humanity. Obviously, that woman has no idea what an angel or a [bodhisattva](#) actually is, nor does she have any knowledge of the level of being of anyone on the planet, even herself. Similarly, there are also people on this planet that we can call “[demons](#).” These are people who have no conscience. People who suffer incredible pain and their only interests are violence, thievery, lying, stealing, taking advantage of others, making others suffer, etc. This planet is generating more and more such people every day. They are spreading like a disease, and overflowing from the prisons, and filling up the government offices and corporate offices and media production centers.

In the Gnostic tradition, our interest is not in the outer meaning. Knowing about beings in other dimensions does not contribute directly towards our own situation. We are in need of a profound change, thus we need to study this symbol in a deeper way.

The Inner Meaning

On the [Tree of Life](#), that middle Sephiroth by itself ([Malkuth](#)) is the physical world, and below that are the hells, and above it are the heavens. How we behave, how we act, and the content of mind, heart, and soul determine where we go after death. That philosophical structure exists also in the Bhavachakra. The six realms represent the potential places where we can go when we die. That is determined by the central part core of the wheel, by action: how we act, how we behave. The consequences of what we do from moment to moment guide us in our progression from life to life. So, our external place is created by our internal bhava. Therefore, this wheel must also apply to our internal, psychological state of being. That is the second level of meaning, the deeper level of meaning. The Bhavachakra represents what exists inside of us, psychologically. These six worlds are a reflection of our own psychology.

The innermost meaning is that all of these worlds all of these beings that exist in these worlds are inside of us too. We have many parts in our psyche. We are not one person. We contradict ourselves. We have many surging desires, thoughts, interests, wills, longings, and pains. Each of those is a psychological entity, symbolized in many ways throughout religion and mythology, yet which we can verify for ourselves through simple self-observation.

In the [Tree of Life](#), the sphere between heaven and hell is called [Malkuth](#) in [Hebrew](#), which means “the kingdom.” That Kingdom, [Malkuth](#), represents the world outside of us, and it also represents our physical body. Our body is a kingdom, too. Our mind is a kingdom. In the world around us, we see that there are many types of people living in this kingdom, many types of beings, animals, plants, minerals, many types of people. There are subtle beings that we do not see with our eyes. There are many types of beings in the kingdom in the world around us, both in other dimensions and also in the immediate sense. Also in our personal [Malkuth](#), there are many classes of beings. In popular culture in the west, we sometimes see that depiction of the Angel on one shoulder, and the devil on the other shoulder. And the Angel is saying, “Do the right thing, do the good thing,” and the devil is saying “No, you deserve to fulfill your desires, do it. Do it, who cares what other people say, no one will know. You can get away with it.” Well, there is not just one angel and one devil in us, there are millions inside of each of us, and they are constantly fighting to control “the kingdom.” There is a constant battle going on inside of heads, our hearts, and our souls to control our kingdom. Why? Because there is no king or queen in charge! We are not consistent. One day we are very serious about our spirituality, then a different desire emerges, whatever that desire is that seduces us. “Tomorrow we will renounce that desire, tomorrow we will stop doing that one thing we should not be doing.” We may have many of those. We are a great contradiction.

This is the level of meaning that we need to study: how the Bhavachakra teaches us about our mind.

Bhava

The word भव **Bhava** comes from the Sanskrit word भू bhu, which means “to become, to be.” It can be interpreted in many different ways depending on how it is utilized. In Hinduism, for example, many of the scriptures describe bhava, for example, and really what they are addressing is attitude. This is especially important in relation to Bhakti [Yoga](#), which is one of the main teachings given in the

Bhagavad Gita. The Bhagavad Gita is a great teaching from Krishna about attitude, about the Bhava of the disciple of the Lord. The attitude that Krishna teaches to Arjuna is,

“Whoso performeth- diligent, content-
The work allotted him, whate'er it be,
Lays hold of perfectness! Hear how a man
Findeth perfection, being so content:
He findeth it through worship- wrought by work-
Of HIM that is the Source of all which lives,
Of HIM by Whom the universe was stretched.
"Better thine own work is, though done with fault,
Than doing others' work, ev'n excellently.
He shall not fall in sin who fronts the task
Set him by Nature's hand! Let no man leave
His natural duty, Prince! though it bear blame!
For every work hath blame, as every flame
Is wrapped in smoke! Only that man attains
Perfect surcease of work whose work was wrought
With mind unfettered, soul wholly subdued,
Desires for ever dead, results renounced.” - Bhagavad Gita ch.18

Everything you do, perform it without self interest, without chasing your desires, without satisfying your own interests, without beefing up your pride. Do everything as a service for humanity and as a service to divinity. Take yourself out of the equation. That is the Bhava or attitude of someone who is very sincere about their religious pursuit. It is not an external attitude or a face that you wear to show others. It is an internal attitude. It is a way of doing every action whether it is physical, emotional, or mental. It is an attitude of humility and devotion to [God](#).

Bhava can also mean a state of being. It could mean a type of becoming that is emerging or growing or emerging anew. It can mean a state of mind.

This word is really important because even though it may seem simple to you in this context, once you get into the philosophy of [Meditation](#), this word becomes very challenging. Then you start to deal with, “Who is this in me who has this Bhava?”

When you understand the Bhava of existence, the true innate becoming of all things, then your relationship to that becomes very questionable. If everything is emerging from the Absolute, which is nothingness and is the root of all things, then, “Who am I? What of me is real? Especially if during my day to day life I am constantly tripping over my own feet and hurting myself all of the time and hurting people around me all of the time, who is that? Who is acting? Who is thinking? Who is feeling?”

Bhava is critical: the attitude, the state of being. Why? Because every action we perform has a consequence. This creates a flow of energy in nature. Our actions, feelings, and thoughts are deluded, mistaken. We create a continuity of existence that is flawed, and so we suffer.

“...birth is suffering, old age is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering. Union with unpleasant things is suffering, separation from pleasant things is suffering, not obtaining what we wish is suffering, in short the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering...” - Buddha

Is anyone not suffering? Has anyone ever met anyone that is not suffering? Look at that question seriously, because your mind tells you that nobody suffers like you do. Right? Isn't it true that the mind is saying, “Look what they have. I want that.” You are longing for something you do not have, and are resenting the ones who have it. Suffering is not just physical pain or emotional anguish that causes you to break out in tears. Suffering is our state of being, right now, because we are disconnected from the truth, the true nature of reality, our very own Being who is united with the Absolute.

The Absolute is unconditioned. It is not bound by karma. Meaning, it is a pure state of being; that is the absolute state of happiness: Paranishpanna, a state of ecstasy, the likes of which we cannot even imagine, because it is not based on any kind of sensation. It is not based on physical sensation, emotional sensation, or mental sensation. It is a state of existence that is pure, unconditioned, and unlimited. It is the purity of the point of view or Bhava of [God](#), Divinity. In that state of being (bhava), there is no pain, no karma, no limitation. Yet, there is absolute knowledge.

We do not have that, nothing even close to that. We might have physical security in the world right now, yet we remain in a state of suffering because we inevitably will lose our possessions and social status; we do not know when, or what will happen after that. We do not even know what will happen later today. We are in a state of ignorance regarding what will happen to us. Regarding everything, we

know nothing. We have concepts of [God](#), but we have never seen [God](#). We have concepts of Buddha, but we have never seen Buddha. We have beliefs and ideas of religion, about mysticism, about other dimensions and other worlds, but we have no experience of them. We have no real knowledge (Jna, [Gnosis](#), Da'ath), but a great deal of ignorance. Because of that, we are caught in cyclic existence: Samsara.

Cyclic Existence

Samsara is a word in Sanskrit. Samsara literally means “to flow.” What flows? Energy that is propelled by action.

Our [Consciousness](#) right now is being propelled by what we just did. The state of being you are experiencing right now is a direct consequence of your previous state of being. The way you will feel in the next moment is determined by how you feel now. That is: because we are asleep, unaware, our experience of life is determined by that, in the same way that the experience of the leaf on the wind is determined by being detached from the tree. We do not consciously direct our “flow.” We are carried by forces we do not even know exist.

“By oneself is evil done;

by oneself is one defiled.

By oneself is evil left undone;

by oneself is one made pure.

Purity and impurity depended on oneself;

no one can purify another.” - Dhammapada

Who are you blaming on how you feel when in reality you have created your life, your experience? We created our own everything, through our attitude. Parents often criticize and correct their children, saying, “You have a bad attitude! If you are going to get through school, through life, you need to have a better attitude.” This is true. Spiritually, it is even more important. Our Bhava, state of being, attitude, determines everything.

If you really want to understand why you suffer, it is not hard to find out. It is very easy. All you have to do is open your eyes and look at yourself. What is your attitude, your Bhava, from moment to moment? Is it angry? Critical, stressed, anxious, fearful, arrogant, proud, passionate, indifferent, lethargic, lazy, all of the above depending on what time of day? Depending on whether you had a coffee or not? The truth is that we go through all those states and constantly go through all of those states with no willpower over those states. Things happen, we react. Things happen, again we react. Things keep happening, we react. We keep reacting; we do not exercise dominion over our kingdom psychologically. We do not take charge of our perspective or our attitude. Because of that, we are now trapped in a flow of energy that we have cultivated for centuries. Not just for a few days or a few hours, but for centuries... We are born, we grow, we repeat, we die... It is not an easy thing to change, but it can be done.

“Blind is the world;

here only a few possess insight.

Only a few,

like birds escaping from the net,

go to realms of bliss.” - Dhammapada 13

Cessation of the Cycle

Cessation is the meaning of the word Nirvana. I have explained to you that the Bhavachakra depicts the six realms of Samsara, and one of those realms is called the realm of the Gods. Many people say that is nirvana. Well, loosely speaking we can say that we can say the heavens are Nirvanas, yet that is not the actual meaning of the word. Nirvana means “cessation.” Of what? The cycle. Cessation of the flow that produces Samsara.

Nirvana is also a state of being. You see, both of these are Bhava. Samsara is the Bhava that is conditioned by desire. Not just desire for chocolate or hamburgers, the desire to go to Thailand, or whatever your desires may be. We also have desires for security, appreciation, or for love. Sometimes they are egotistical sometimes they are not. Those types of desires create the flow of satisfaction or pain, and more complicated problems like illness that are rooted in our psychology as well. To change our attitude means to change how we receive perceptions. Instead of responding to them mechanically, reacting with our egos or our desires, with our fears, we instead react consciously with wisdom, to see the truth in the given moment, the reality, then we maintain a cognizant point of view or a conscious attitude: we cause the cessation of the suffering. Suffering is not produced.

For example, if a person is saying, “I hate you, I hate you, I hate you.” How are you going to respond? If you are being how you normally are (that is, asleep, in a state of self-forgetting), you will get mad, you try to defend yourself verbally or physically. But if you are really paying attention, and are aware of yourself and are cognizant of the person, you will realize they are saying that because they are in pain. They are hurting, and you will have compassion for them, and their words will no hurt you, and you will be able to deal with them with love, patience. You will be able to deal with the cause of their suffering and help them. That is cessation. That is directly accurately using the word “nirvana.” It is the cessation of suffering for yourself and the other person.

Now, of course, we need that cessation in everything in our lives. We need to eliminate the causes of all of our suffering, so that the wheel stops.

I am explaining it in this way because all of us have had the typical training in religion where we are told there is a heaven and there is a hell and what you do is going to determine what you do when you die. The fact is that heaven and hell are right now. They are not in the future. Samsara and Nirvana are your Bhava, your state of being. Your state of [Consciousness](#) determines if you are in Samsara or Nirvana. So, what state of being are you in?

“Those who are suffering or who fear suffering, think of Nirvana as an escape and a recompense. They imagine that Nirvana consists in the future annihilation of the senses and the sense-minds; they are not aware that Universal Mind and Nirvana are One, and that this life-and-death world and Nirvana are not to be separated. These ignorant ones, instead of meditating on the imagelessness of Nirvana, talk of different ways of emancipation. Being ignorant of, or not understanding, the teachings of the Tathagatas, they cling to the notion of Nirvana that is outside what is seen of the mind and, thus, go on rolling themselves along with the wheel of life and death.” - Buddha Shakyamuni, Lankavatara Sutra
It is your attitude, your conscious presence, that determines with willpower how you receive everything you see inside and outside. If you have the attitude of an awakened conscious that is receiving impressions and transforming them in order to benefit yourself and others, then you will experience for yourself directly in the moment the reality of Nirvana. Not in the future, but right now. That is what we call “heaven.” It is a cessation in the [Consciousness](#). It is a perspective, a point of view. What I am explaining was stated in a beautiful way by this teacher Padmasambhava (notice the end of his name? -bhava). He said this:

“Samsara and Nirvana have no difference than that between the moment of being unaware and aware, since we are not deluded by perception but by fixation.” - Padmasambhava, Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Samsara and Nirvana are experiences, differentiated by our attitude (bhava). The attitude of our desires of our [ego](#), our anger, lust, pride and fear is one that is fixated on that psychological quality. When lust is in charge of our kingdom, it only wants to fulfill its desire at any cost. Thus, we are in Samsara. If we become aware of that, and our perception is freed from that fixation on that lust, then we can comprehend that each desire can only produce suffering, and it is up to me to liberate myself of that desire. Then, Nirvana, cessation, emerges. This awareness does not solve everything all at once, but it is the beginning.

“Liberation naturally occurs when we recognize that fixated thoughts are only mind grasping at its own empty manifestations.” - Padmasambhava, Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness
What we think, what we fantasize, what we project on the screen of our mind about ourselves and other people, is all empty, unreal. We do not realize it. Even when we have studied these philosophies, we continue with the projection, imagining that we know what we truly do not know. We think that what we project in our mind is real. That is why we are asleep. We are daydreamers, sleepwalkers. We are fantasizing. We are not seeing reality. When we awaken [Consciousness](#), we can then see that the projections of the mind, the stories we tell ourselves, the images we see over and over, are just illusions. They do not exist. In that clear awareness of the projections, we liberate [Consciousness](#). In that moment, in that instant, we liberate ourselves from cyclic state of perception. We can call that “liberation.”

The [Consciousness](#) sees the reality. It says, “What am I doing? I am replaying that scene from work over and over and over again and all I am doing is generating more resentment; all I am doing is generating more blame on others, more justification for myself. It is just my mind...”

Unfortunately, we are asleep. We lack awareness of our self-generated illusion. We do not realize we are standing out on the street without our pants, because we got so distracted that we didn't get dressed. Or we parked the car 20 blocks from where we were supposed to. Or we got on the wrong bus. We do things like this all of the time, and we think it is funny, and we think nonchalantly, “I wasn't paying attention.” We do not realize how serious that is. It is extremely serious. The lack of

being here and now is precisely why we are in so much trouble on this planet. Everyone around us is also distracted. Everybody. We cannot fix them; we cannot even fix ourselves, because we do not try. We need this experience: to experience for ourselves the difference between Samsara and Nirvana. Now, in the moment, by learning to see the projections of the mind for what they are. That is the importance of the Bhavachakra. This teaching. This is the inner meaning. It does not matter if you believe heaven is forever, hell is forever, or if there are [demons](#) and angels, or no angels, or if there is [God](#) or no [God](#). Belief is irrelevant. What matters is your attitude from moment to moment, and how you deal with reality. Your perspective, attitude, Bhava, matters. We in this tradition do not care if you believe in [God](#) or if you do not believe in [God](#). We want to encourage you to believe in yourself, and believe in your experience, and learn to change for the better.

“The man who is without blind faith,
 who knows the Uncreated (Absolute),
 who has severed all links,
 destroyed all causes (nidanas),
 and thrown out all desires —
 he, truly, is the most excellent of men.” - Dhammapada



This symbol of the Bhavachakra is also present in other traditions. An interesting place is in the Tenth Arcanum of the [Tarot](#). Many people know about the [Tarot](#); few realize that the [Tarot](#) encodes the same laws that you find in every tradition in the world, especially [Tantra](#). The Tenth Arcanum is called the wheel of destiny, retribution... It has many names. This particular image shows an Egyptian representation of the cycle of transmigration. The term transmigration refers to how beings, driven by the flow of their actions and the consequences of those actions, migrate from world to world. You can experience this in your own life and in people you know and in things you observe. Someone that is performing harmful action will inevitably receive the consequences of those actions and their life will get harder. It depends on their karma, and the conditions that are present in their life.

This wheel is in motion on every level, and every aspect of existing things. Beneficial action produces a rise, to go up the wheel, and harmful actions cause us to descend down the wheel. In this [Tarot](#) image, we see a being who is monitoring the rising side and another being who is monitoring the descending side. This is the great cycle of nature that we can call evolution and devolution. This is quite simply what we observe in nature everywhere. Everything that is born grows, develops, then hits its peak, sustains briefly, then decays and dies. All of nature repeats this constantly. Our actions are no different. Everything that we do, everything that we experience, is subject to this cycle. The difference is, the part that is hard for people to grasp, is that the wheel does not stay in one place. The wheel is a spiral. For example, you are born, you live for a while, then you die. You do not stay in one place. You are constantly moving. From lifetime to lifetime, our circumstances can change dramatically. If all the actions we performed in a previous life are rotating in a particular level of nature, the sum of that can bring that wheel up to another level of nature, or down to another level of nature. If you imagine that wheel rotating as a spiral, and rising up, the actions cause us to rise higher, higher and higher. If we start to perform harmful action, we start to descend. Then, we think, “I am not doing one action, I am doing all kinds of things all of the time. Physically, I am doing different things, emotionally and mentally...” Then, you have to do a sum of all of that mathematical material—good actions and bad

actions—and the sum of it is what drives actions upwards or downwards. It starts to get complicated. Then you have to add that together with all the people you interacted with. All the groups that you interacted with, the families, the places you lived, the experiences you have been caught up in... Then, you can see this wheel becomes very complex.

These two images show us life. I know they look simple. Use your imagination and try to realize that what is depicted upon these wheels is every existing being... How all of them have transmigrated from body to body for countless eons... Some rising, some falling...

“Thus deluded by ignorance, bewildered by many a fancy, covered by the meshes of delusion, addicted to the gratification of lust, they fall down into a foul hell.

“Self-conceited, haughty, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices in name, out of ostentation, disregarding ordinance;

“Possessed of egoism, power, insolence, lust and wrath, these malignant people hate Me (the Self within) in their own bodies and those of others.

“These malicious and cruel evildoers, most degraded of men, I hurl perpetually into the wombs of Asuras [[demons](#)] only, in these worlds.

“Obtaining the Asurika wombs, and deluded birth after birth, not attaining to Me, they thus fall, O son of Kunti, into a still lower condition.

“Triple is this gate of hell, destructive of the self,—lust, anger and greed; therefore one should forsake these three.

“The man who has got beyond these three gates of darkness, O son of Kunti, practises what is good for himself, and thus goes to the Goal Supreme.

“He who, setting aside the ordinance of the Shâstra, acts under the impulse of desire, attains not to perfection, nor happiness, nor the Goal Supreme.

“So let the Shâstra be thy authority in ascertaining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinance of the Shâstra, thou shouldst act here.” - Krishna, The Bhagavad Gita

You see, if we do the right things, we can rise to become Buddhas, masters. If we do harmful things, we can become [demons](#), devils. That is true of every being that exists.

What is interesting to note here is that all of this depends on this little axis in the middle of the wheel. Everything that exists comes down to three things.

The Three Forces

We often talk about a trinity in nature. Most religions represent a trinity to us.

- Christianity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit.
- Hinduism: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva.
- Buddhism: Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya.

In all religions, we find many trinities. In the Gnostic tradition, we talk about the Logos, which has three aspects. In [Hebrew](#), it is [Kether](#), [Chokmah](#), and [Binah](#).

There are three triangles in the [Tree of Life](#). The upper triangle represents the three forces that create. On all levels, from the superior dimensions near the Absolute all the way down to the hells, all actions are produced by a union of three forces. Anything that happens, happens because three forces united and produced energy and a consequence.

You can put a man and a woman together and nothing will be created unless you have the third factor: sex. You can put fuel and ignition together, but nothing will happen unless the conditions are right.

Match, wood, paper. You need three forces:

- positive, projective force
- receptive, negative force
- conciliating, equilibrating force

Whether you want to create something or destroy something, it always requires three forces, three factors.

These three forces are used by the gods to create. These three forces are used by the [demons](#) to destroy. Every action, in every level, utilizes the three forces.

In the center of the Bhavachakra, you see these three animals. Publicly, traditionally, these are explained as:



- a bird that represents craving
- a snake that represents aversion
- a pig or a dog that represents ignorance

So, these are the three forces as modified by our deluded perception.

These three forces in combination create suffering.

In concept it is quite simple, yet let me remind you that the previous image showed us every existing thing: every being, world, planet, animal, universe, angel, [God](#), plant, animal, microbe, atom... spins on this wheel because of that axle. Thus, this wheel is not simple. Even the gods are bound by it.

When we go deeper we can see that these three forces are constantly influencing everything we do, and we have no perception of it, and that is why we suffer.

Not only do we lack perception, but also, how can you control something that you cannot even see?

You cannot. How can you perform surgery if you cannot see what you are doing? How can you save the life of a dying person if you cannot see the illness or the cause of the suffering? You cannot, and if you try, you will probably kill them, or make their suffering worse. This is our cancer, our disease: these three symbolic animals. To be cured, we need to open our eyes.

At the base of our psyche, the pig represents a fundamental ignorance, a lack of knowledge of our true nature. They chose a pig to represent this because a pig is stupid. I know nowadays people think pigs are smart and they can do tricks, etc., but pigs sleep in the dirtiest places and will eat anything you give them. If you give them a rubber tire, they will eat it. They will eat trash, garbage, polluted things. If you fall down in their pen, they will eat you (yes, this has happened). They do not care. That is the reason why pigs represent ignorance. We have that as a basis of our deluded psyche; we pull so much garbage into our minds without any discrimination at all. We are pigs, psychologically.

That ignorance is a lack of knowledge of our own inner divinity. It is a lack of knowing that we inside have a Buddha nature, a Bhava, an inner nature that can become a Buddha, a [God](#), a Deity. We have that, but we are burying it in trash, and in vomit, and in all the filthiness of this world that we happily ingest, adding it to the filthiness in our mind, without any discrimination. Primarily, this form of ignorance is a lack of knowing our true nature. We are asleep, and we have no knowledge.

The serpent represents the characteristic of aversion. It is also called hatred. If you look at hatred, it is something that pushes away, a form of aversion. Really, it is not an aversion against others. It is an aversion against things that our ignorance does not want. For example, some people when they hear these lectures, have a lot of aversion to the things we are saying. They do not want to hear it. We do not want to hear the truth. We want to think everything is going to be okay, and [God](#) is going to come down out of a cloud and say, "Bless you my child, everything you have done will be forgiven, come to heaven with me, and we are going to have a great time." Life does not work like that. It never has, and never will. We do not want to hear that, because we have a lot of aversion for the truth. We have a lot of aversion to cleaning up our mess. We want someone else to do it. We want some divinity to take it away. We do not want to clean up our vomit and our filthiness. We just want to ignore it. You see, ignorance and aversion work hand in hand.

The third one is the bird that represents craving, thirst, attachment. That attachment is to all the projections that we have about ourselves. "I am like this, and I am like that," and "I was wronged and I am justified in being the way that I am." All of that is lies. All of that is craving towards a false identity. It is our the psychological song that we sing to ourselves all of the time about how much suffering we have, how much pain, "No one understands me." At its base, this is what craving is.

“The Blessed One said: ‘And which craving is the ensnarer that has flowed along, spread out, and caught hold, with which this world is smothered and enveloped like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, and bad destinations? These eighteen things evaluated by craving dependent on what is internal and eighteen things evaluated by craving dependent on what is external.

“And which are the eighteen things evaluated by craving dependent on what is internal? There being ‘I am,’ there comes to be ‘I am here,’ there comes to be ‘I am like this’ ... ‘I am otherwise’ ... ‘I am bad’ ... ‘I am good’ ... ‘I might be’ ... ‘I might be here’ ... ‘I might be like this’ ... ‘I might be otherwise’ ... ‘May I be’ ... ‘May I be here’ ... ‘May I be like this’ ... ‘May I be otherwise’ ... ‘I will be’ ... ‘I will be here’ ... ‘I will be like this’ ... ‘I will be otherwise.’ These are the eighteen things evaluated by craving dependent on what is internal.

“And which are the eighteen things evaluated by craving dependent on what is external? There being ‘I am because of this (or: by means of this),’ there comes to be ‘I am here because of this,’ there comes to be ‘I am like this because of this’ ... ‘I am otherwise because of this’ ... ‘I am bad because of this’ ... ‘I am good because of this’ ... ‘I might be because of this’ ... ‘I might be here because of this’ ... ‘I might be like this because of this’ ... ‘I might be otherwise because of this’ ... ‘May I be because of this’ ... ‘May I be here because of this’ ... ‘May I be like this because of this’ ... ‘May I be otherwise because of this’ ... ‘I will be because of this’ ... ‘I will be here because of this’ ... ‘I will be like this because of this’ ... ‘I will be otherwise because of this.’” - Buddha Shakyamuni, Tanha Sutta

At its base, all craving is about our false sense of self.

These three factors affect every single instinct because we are not aware of it. We are always craving and seeking something to make us feel secure and good and avoid the things that make us feel bad, doubtful, ashamed of ourselves, and of these, two depend on that fundamental ignorance of the truth. “Monks, these three are causes for the origination of actions. Which three? Craving is a cause for the origination of actions. Aversion is a cause for the origination of actions. Ignorance is a cause for the origination of actions.

“Any action performed with craving — born of craving, caused by craving, originating from craving: wherever one's selfhood turns up, there that action will ripen. Where that action ripens, there one will experience its fruit, either in this very life that has arisen or further along in the sequence.

“Any action performed with aversion — born of aversion, caused by aversion, originating from aversion: wherever one's selfhood turns up, there that action will ripen. Where that action ripens, there one will experience its fruit, either in this very life that has arisen or further along in the sequence.

“Any action performed with ignorance — born of delusion, caused by ignorance, originating from ignorance: wherever one's selfhood turns up, there that action will ripen. Where that action ripens, there one will experience its fruit, either in this very life that has arisen or further along in the sequence.

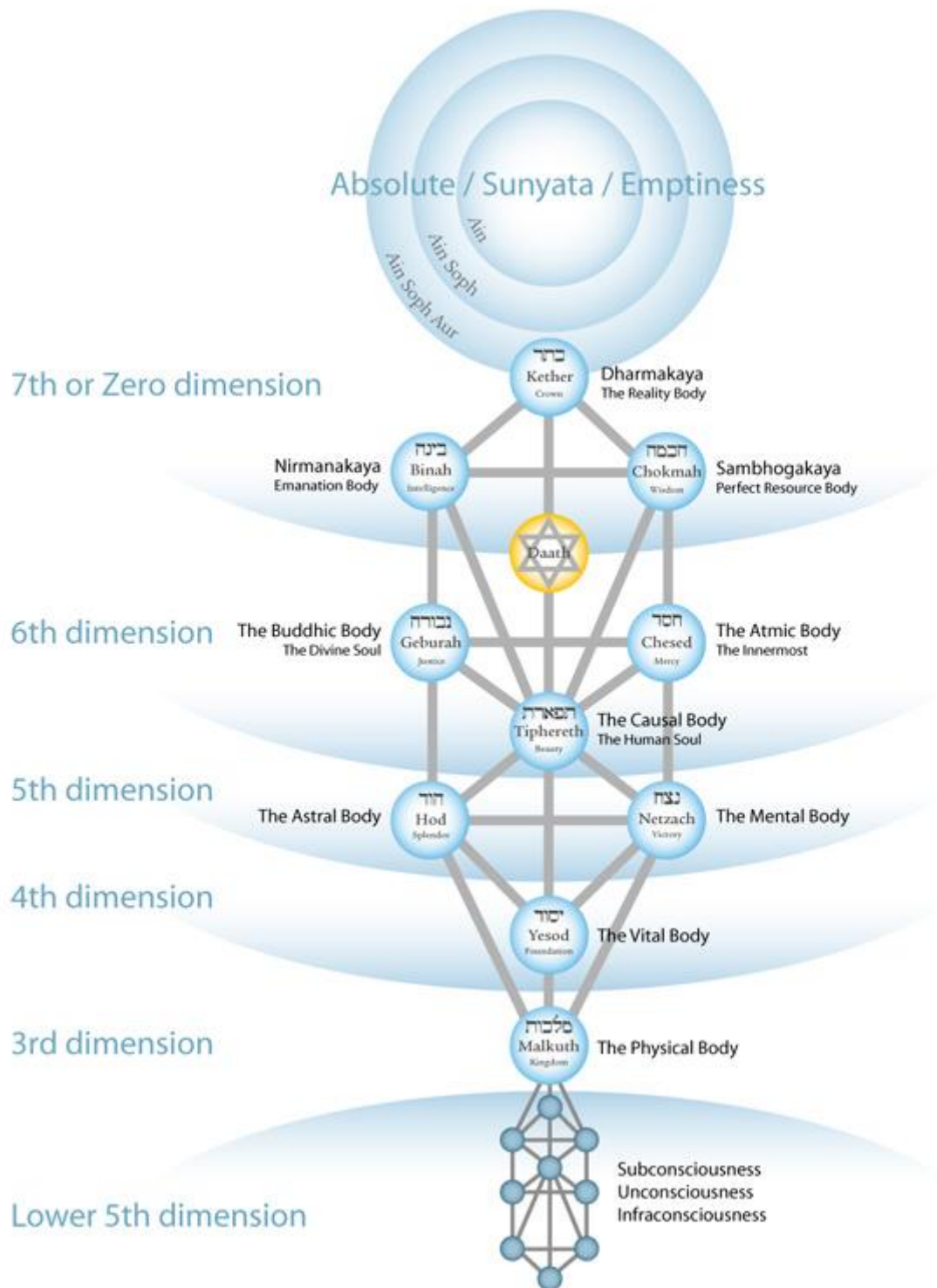
“Just as when seeds are not broken, not rotten, not damaged by wind & heat, capable of sprouting, well-buried, planted in well-prepared soil, and the rain-God would offer good streams of rain. Those seeds would thus come to growth, increase, and abundance. In the same way, any action performed with craving... performed with aversion... performed with ignorance — born of ignorance, caused by ignorance, originating from ignorance: wherever one's selfhood turns up, there that action will ripen. Where that action ripens, there one will experience its fruit, either in this very life that has arisen or further along in the sequence.

“These are three causes for the origination of actions...” - Buddha Shakyamuni, Nidana Sutta

That is the publicly given teaching. And that is deep and difficult to learn: to see craving, aversion, and ignorance in our every moment and action, and to stop facilitating the production of suffering.

If you want to go deeper into that, then you can also look and see that these three relate to the [three brains](#), the protoplasmic body, etc. But on the deepest level, they relate to the three Gunas. Even someone who is a [God](#), who has eliminated a large percentage of the [ego](#), has created the soul, and lives in the Nirvanas, suffers because these three roots are still present in them. Do not think because you been studying [Gnosis](#) for a few weeks or a few years that you have got a handle on it. Even the gods in Nirvana do not! It is important to understand this, because three forces create.

The [Tree of Life](#) is a series of triangles.



The lowest triangle is related to us here and now. Here we are in our physical body. In our physical body, we have:

- energy (our vital body) [Yesod](#)
- emotions (the astral aspect) [Hod](#)
- thoughts (the mental aspect) [Netzach](#)

Energy, thoughts, emotion (three forces), put those together and you can change the world, for good or bad. The difference is determined by bhava. Energy, emotion, thought; Gandhi united those three forces within himself and changed a continent. Hitler did the same. Each put energy in motion: the force of three. How do you use it? What will result from your use of the three forces in yourself?

Spiritually speaking, there are:

- [Causal body](#) (willpower) [Tiphereth](#)
- [Buddhic body](#) ([Consciousness](#), spiritual body) [Geburah](#)
- [Atmic body](#) (the Spirit) [Gedulah](#) / [Chesed](#)

If those three are united, you become a Christ, a Christified being, a very high master. From that bhava, you can change worlds on an even higher level.

Beyond that are:

- [Kether](#): Dharmakaya
- [Chokmah](#): Sambhogakaya
- [Binah](#): Nirmanakaya

With these three, you become a self realized resurrected master, one of the highest types of beings that exist, like Jesus, a being that is so pure they are incomprehensible to us. With this bhava, one can create universes. One affects uncountable beings.

Each of these levels of Being, levels of Bhava, depend on the three forces.

Those forces in us that are acting in a harmful way must be converted into forces for benefit.

Think about that. Think of what will occur if you transform your ignorance into knowledge. By knowledge, we do not mean book knowledge. By knowledge we mean [Gnosis](#) what in Sanskrit is called Jna. In Tibetan it is called Rigpa. It is the light of this moment. It is experiential knowledge of an awakened [Consciousness](#) here and now that sees reality, that is not confused. It is not in a state of ignorance, but in a state of knowing. It sees truth.

In the example I gave of the angry person, you would see that their anger is a state of suffering. Why would you be mad and respond in anger to a person who is suffering? That would be awful. If someone is suffering, you should respond with sweetness, kindness, gentleness, and a healing attitude. It takes knowledge to do that. That would be how this pig in us becomes converted into something that is not animal, but human.

Likewise, instead of aversion towards things and craving towards things, instead of aversion, we have equanimity. We should see things for what they are, neither craving nor avoiding, but having equanimity, able to act when we need to act, and pause when we need to pause.

“A person unknowing: the actions performed by him, born of craving, born of aversion, and born of ignorance, whether many or few, are experienced right here: no other ground is found.

“So a person, knowing, sheds craving, aversion, and ignorance; giving rise to clear knowledge, he sheds all bad destinations.” - Buddha Shakyamuni, Nidana Sutta

The three forces are psychological. When liberated from craving, aversion, and ignorance, they are the qualities that a Buddha has. Rather than ignorance of self-nature, a Buddha has knowledge of self-nature, and as such can see the truth. This knowledge provides even small things like knowing when to speak and act and knowing when not to. That sounds simple, but to do that is not simple for us, because we are asleep.

That is why we need to see the ring just outside of that inner axis of the wheel, that ring of karma. In the center are those three forces: craving, aversion, ignorance. If those three are ruling our psyche from moment to moment, and they are in charge of our kingdom, then our three traitors are ruling our psychological kingdom:

- the demon of the mind: Pilate
- the demon of the heart: Caiaphas
- the demon of desire: Judas

These three traitors make it seem that all of the actions we perform benefit us. These three [demons](#) (Mara's daughters) delude us by feeding our false sense of self, by gratifying our desires. As we serve them, our actions create more and more suffering. Samsara.

On the other hand, if we convert those three forces from moment to moment into conscious knowledge, and knowing when to act and when not to act, then those actions whether physical, mental or emotional cause benefit, and we rise, raising our level of being to become more and more pure, and more and more knowledgeable, more and more helpful. A better being.

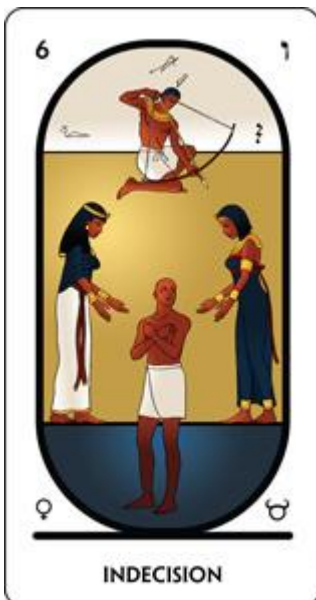
All of this is synthesized or depicted you see in the Bhavachakra here, in these six realms.



This is the [rune Hagal](#). We gave a [course about the runes](#). The rune Hagal is the root rune, the root symbol of all the other runes. To remind you, runes are not just from the Nordics. This rune in particular can be found in every part of the world. It is hidden in Chinese and in Japanese characters, it is hidden in the Aztec calendar, it is hidden everywhere. The rune Hagel is *haaaaaaaaaa*, the primordial breath that emerges out of the Absolute. It is the creative beginning.

What do you see in this Hagal? Clearly, it defines and arranges six spaces. Do you see that those six spaces are defined by three lines, three forces that are crossed? It is the three forces: projective, receptive, balancing. This is a very profound symbol hidden there in plain sight.

Indecision



Those six realms also relate to the Sixth Arcanum in the [Tarot](#). In the Sixth Arcanum, we see a soul standing in between two women. The person represents you and me. Half of his body is in the dark waters, meaning he is in Samsara. His feet are submerged. He is between worlds. He is confused, because his body is turned one way and his head is turned the other way. He is not consistent, and is contradicting himself. Worse, he is looking back, at a seductive woman. In the Bible, she is called the great harlot, Babylon, Jezebel, Lilith, Delilah, the whore, who gives many promises of sensual pleasure, satisfaction, security, technology, all the things we want. Because he is confused by her image, he does not see the one directly in front of him, who is his own Divine Mother. She is nature, but the reality of nature.

In Hinduism and Buddhism, the mother has many names, but the one that is most important is **मय Maya**. Most people in the West who have been badly taught about ancient mysticism have been taught that Maya just means “illusion.” It can mean that, but literally the term Maya means “not that.” Why? Because the Divine Mother is the Absolute. She is non-being. She is “not that.” She is not the twelve Nidanas. Remember I explained the twelve Nidanas saying,

“This is, because that is.

This is not, because that is not.

This ceases to be, because that ceases to be.”

She is “not that.” She is not bound by the twelve Nidanas. She is not bound by the six realms. She is not bound by the three forces, because she is the three forces. She is the three Gunas. She is the Prakriti. She is Svabhava, the ultimate inherent nature of all things.

Notice that Maya मय is the exact opposite of Yama यम. She is the Absolute. He is the manifestation that emerges from her. They are two parts of the same phenomenon.

The man represented in the Sixth Arcanum does not see Her. He is us. We want to go towards the light, but we want to take our iPod. We want to take our TV, and our car, our wife and children. We want to take that cool outfit we just bought, and all the things we get seduced by, materially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally. We have a lot of attachment to things that cause us to suffer, because they sustain our ignorance of reality. That is why the being sits above with the arrow of karma.

The Six Realms

In most cases, when you study the wheel, people think about it only in relation to external beings. People think about the Gods in their world, and the demigods their world of the demigods, and themselves in the human realm. That is all true relatively speaking, but that point of view is shallow. There is more to it. Now it is time for us to go deeper, for us to understand that this has more importance, and more meaning that we need to grasp, comprehend, and meditate on.

The six realms:

- Gods (Sanskrit: Devas)
- Demi-gods (Sanskrit: Asura)
- Humans (Sanskrit: Manuṣya)
- Animals (Sanskrit: Tiryagyoni)
- Hungry ghosts (Sanskrit: Preta)
- Hells (Sanskrit: Naraka)

Everybody who studies this immediately thinks, “I am in the human kingdom, so I do not need to worry. I am okay.” Let us revisit that and look at it from our own experience. Let us reflect on that from what we know and what we can see.

It may be true that there are gods in the world of the gods, so what? It may be true that if I do good things, maybe I will go to the world of the gods. Okay, maybe. Let us talk about what is going on right now. What we can see right now, then we will go deeper.

Who are gods? If we take this teaching and apply it to what we can perceive, we can see who are gods. Traditionally, the gods and the devas are described as a class of being who have everything that one could want: beauty, power, admiration, and respect. Anything material that they could want, they could have. They have all the food, all the wealth, they control vast economies. They have people who worship them and serve them; they can have anything they want with the snap of their fingers, and all they do with all of that is pursue meaningless distractions all of the time. Really, they are bored. All they do is pursue stupid things, they play games, they collect stuff, they have huge and beautiful jewels and fabrics, and whatever sensual pleasures they want, they get.

Who are the demigods? Traditionally, they are explained to be less powerful than the gods, but not with as much wealth and power. So the demigods are very jealous and want what the Gods have. The demigods in Greek Mythology are called Titans. The demigods want what the gods have, and have jealousy and envy and are always waging wars on the gods. They try to be friends with them on one hand, have wars with them on another, and pit them against each other, always creating conflicts and making a mess of things, and they always lose. In their arrogance, they always think that they can conquer the gods.

Who are the humans? Traditionally, humans are said to be those who suffer birth, sickness, cold, heat, weakness, and inability to be in charge of themselves. They are always being moved around by the forces of nature, then they get old and die. They do not have much when it comes to possessions. They suffer a lot from hunger and thirst, but they have a relative degree of freedom. They can hear about the teaching, they can practice the teaching, and have the longing to accomplish the teaching about liberation. Humans are said to be in a better situation than the gods and demigods, who do not want to become liberated. Human beings have suffering, but they have the potential to change it. The gods do not care about liberation. Why would they want to be liberated? They have everything they want.

Liberated from what? Liberated from their gems, jewels, and palaces? Why? They have no interest. And the demigods only want what the gods have.

Animals are said to be that class of being that suffer under the hand of humans. Animals are those who are ignorant, stupid, always suffering, even more than the humans, from hunger, thirst, the weather, being eaten not only by humans but other animals. They are subject to diseases and illnesses and cannot do anything about them. The humans enslave them and force them to do labor for the rest of their lives. The humans put them in places that are cultivated just to be eaten. Animals have incredible suffering. They cannot do anything about it and cannot practice the dharma. They suffer, suffer, and suffer, and die. Then they are born again, and suffer some more.

Hungry ghosts suffer more than the animals. They are always craving. They are always fearful, and always running. They are hungry, because they are never satisfied. They see the thing that they want, and are so hungry and thirsty, and go to eat it, and painfully find it was just an illusion, a mirage, and it was not there. Then they see a buffet of food, and it is free, and they run to it, and their hunger is building and their mouth is watering, and they get there, and nothing is there. They made all that effort to go there, and there was nothing, and in that off occasion when they grasp a little something to drink to cool them, it ends up burning them, and they never satisfy their thirst. They suffer more than all these other beings.

Below that are the hells. In the hells you find all these types of beings who exhausted the causes that put them in those upper realms. The energy that was put in those realms were exhausted, and because those beings did not make the effort to liberate themselves from the wheel, they are drawn back down for the harmful actions they have not yet paid. There, they suffer the consequences of their harmful actions. They say that there are eighteen hells in the Buddhist philosophy, different numbers in other traditions, some nine some there are hundreds. They represent where the beings go who have done nothing good and have to pay their debts by suffering the consequences of their actions.

The Six Realms in [Malkuth](#)

Externally, in this physical world, do we see these beings in our lives now? From my perspective, the gods are celebrities, politicians, and rich people who have everything physically, terrestrially, and have no interest in dharma. These are a small fraction of the population of this planet, but they control the wealth and power.

Below them are the demigods, those people who have some money or status, but they are so envious of the rich people that they are constantly causing lawsuits and wars to try to get more wealth and power. They do not care about the Dharma and they do not care about anyone else but themselves. There are more demigods than gods, but their numbers are still very few.

What about the humans? In this tradition we have explained that a real human is someone who created the soul. Someone who is not an animal. There are very few of them on this planet. True human beings are those who trapped in the middle between the upper and lower worlds, and who are working to liberate themselves from all of it.

Most “human beings” on this planet know nothing about liberation. Really, all of us are animals.

Really, when we look at our lives, we can see that we are animals controlled by forces that we cannot change: cultural, political, economic, forces that push us from one place to another. We have to work constantly, and we are enslaved by the beings that have power. We have no freedom. Instead, everything we do is to help them get more money and more power. They drive us to work more and more, yet in the end we gain nothing. What we generally eat is poisonous and bad for us. We cannot get pure food on this planet anymore. We cannot get clean water or air on this planet anymore.

Everything is polluted because of the wars between the gods and demigods. Worse, we are sent to fight in those wars, dying for ideas and concepts that hide the truth: wars are about money and power, neither of which are ever given to the animals. We are the animals. We are ruled by our instincts.

It is stated in tradition that:

- the gods are ruled by attachment
- demigods by envy
- the humans by passion and lust
- animals are ruled by aggression, instinct, fear
- hungry ghosts by thirst and gluttony
- the hells by everything negative

Really, we are in these lower classes. We are all at the animal level. I apologize, I do not mean that as an insult, but really, if you analyze our minds, and the way people behave on this planet now, we behave like animals. We do not behave like human beings. Human beings are gentle, kind, and

someone who remembers [God](#) and acts to benefit everyone. Animals only want to survive. Animals are ruled by instinct, lust, anger, and envy. This human populace is not human not yet. Even more people are hungry ghosts. These are the people who are suffering even more than the mere animals. Hungry ghosts truly have nothing. These beings are somewhere around 90-95% of the population of the world. Those of us who live in first world countries are in a small minority when we have a certain amount of money in the bank and buy pretty much buy what we want to buy, food, basic necessities. If you are able to get the things that you basically need, you are an exception. Most people on this planet cannot, and have to go without everyday. Most people are in the category of hungry ghosts. They go to sleep hungry, and they wake up hungry. They want something to eat, they go to get it, and it is not there. It is too expensive. It is poisoned. They cannot get clean water, clean food, everything is poisoned, they cannot get clothes, they have to go without. Most of them have one shirt, one pair of pants, and one pair of shoes. Not a closet full. Most people. They really do not have time or interest in dharma, [Gnosis](#), because they only can think to survive and live another day. Many of them even give up on that. A large percentage of this earth's population belongs in that level. We can call them hungry ghosts. They are ghosts, because they have not yet awakened anything inside. They are phantoms. In [Hebrew](#), we call them klipa, "empty shells."

Finally, there are the beings in the lowest hells. This is painful to talk about because most of the beings on this planet are already submerged in hell. Most of this planet is under the threat of death everyday. It seems to be getting worse. It goes in waves and it rises and falls and seems to be getting worse over the decades and years to be intensifying. There are more places in the world that are under the threat of violence than what there has been. And not just mild violence, but very extreme violence, and not just violence from each other, but also violence from nature. Everyone is witnessing the violence of nature. This is karmic. The scientists refuse to recognize that, because they want to put everything into terms that clear us of any responsibility. Nevertheless, everything that happens has a cause, and everything that happens has a cause in our psyche.

More and more beings are being subject to the hell level where the karma must be paid. We are paying, and every being is subject to that, and all the beings are affected by that.

The Six Realms in Ourselves

The most important way to understand the Bhavachakra is to see all of this is in our own minds. All of us at some point will experience these aspects of existence in our own experience. Maybe not in a very dramatic way, but in some form. You may suddenly find yourself in some situation where you are being treated like [God](#). Everyone respects you, everyone does what you want, and you have everything that you want. It may not last very long, but you really like it, and you want it to continue, and when it is taken away, you suffer incredibly. It is more common to experience the position of being a demigod, where you have some degree of power and comfort, and you will fight and lie and cheat to get more. You may experience times in life where you feel like an animal, and other times like a hungry ghost.

These elements are present in the continuity of our experience, but also in the contents of our psyche. We also have psychological elements that correspond to all of these aspects. Every single one of us has egos of pride that considers itself to be a [God](#). We all have them. We all have egos that are with the attitude of the Bhava of the demigods, egos of dense envy that want what others have and will commit crimes to get it. We all have that. We all have egos that are so-called human that just want to get by and want some form of religion even to give us comfort; we want some security and some sense that everything will be okay in the end. Of course, we all have the animals of lust, pride, anger, fear, envy, laziness, and we have the egos of the hungry ghosts, and all of them are in the hells.

To put it bluntly, we need to change. The way we do that is learning how to turn this flow around. As I was explaining to you, the three forces that work through us and through our [three brains](#)—the body, heart, and mind—and through our three nervous systems—and through our three inner bodies—can be utilized to create the cessation of suffering. The way to do it is to be present here and now, all of the time, and transform your bhava.

"To avoid all evil, to cultivate good,
and to cleanse one's mind —

this is the teaching of the Buddhas." - Dhammapada

You see, Samsara means "to flow." The flowing through this wheel where all the beings are flowing from one life to another are constantly driven by the forces they themselves put into motion can be undone if at the axle we convert these three forces into a beneficial energy. We synthesize them in this way:

- Birth
- Death
- Sacrifice

That is how these three forces at the center of the ring can instead cause this wheel of becoming to spin upwards in a spiral to higher levels of being. It is quite simple. Shantideva pointed out in *Bodhicharyavatara*:

“All suffering comes from serving oneself, and all happiness comes from serving others.”

That is a Bhava. That is the attitude of a [bodhisattva](#).

The [bodhisattva](#)

On the painting of the Bhavachakra, the [bodhisattva](#)'s are depicted above the wheel, in space. Did you notice that in those six classes of beings we did not talk about [bodhisattvas](#)? That is because the [bodhisattvas](#) have escaped the wheel. They experience Nirvana, cessation. By [bodhisattvas](#) we mean those who have eliminated the [ego](#) completely. These are very high masters. We can call them gods, but they are not gods that live in the nirvanic levels, in samsara. The gods that live in the six realms are attached. They are the tempting gods who have great power and great beauty. To anyone that wants to escape the wheel they say, “Why do you want to leave? Look at all you have? Come join us it is a lot of fun. Everybody will love you, and you will have everything you ever wanted. You will be totally happy. Why do you want to go up to the Absolute? There is nothing there. It is empty...” Truly, it is empty. Empty of suffering. It is full liberation. It is empty of attachment. Empty of ignorance. Empty of pain. Then, the [bodhisattvas](#) that overcome the tempting gods and achieve those heights, do you know what they do? They renounce it. They escape the wheel, and eliminate all of their desires, they convert these three forces purely for the benefit of others. They no longer produce suffering for themselves or for others. They are no longer chained by the twelve Nidanas. They are no longer under the grasp of Yama, and they escape the wheel completely and go to the Absolute, and say, Yes, it is very nice here, but look at all those who suffer...” So they renounce it and go back to help all of those beings who are suffering in ignorance. That is why when you look at many of the graphics in the temples, you will see [bodhisattvas](#) in each of the six realms teaching the dharma. How can someone do that? It is inconceivable to us, that a being can escape all of the suffering of existence, and then willingly come back to be surrounded by it. Anyone have an idea why they do it? Love.

Can anyone think of anything better than to be that level of being? To be that pure, to have that as your Bhava, your way of being? Pure love. No self. To be pure love for other beings, and to sacrifice yourself, to sacrifice everything, to help them come out of suffering, to see reality, to transform. That is what the [bodhisattvas](#) do. So, that is why I thought this lecture would be good to talk about.

Questions and Answers

Audience: Are there gods, and what constitutes their level of being?

Instructor: Yes, there are gods. The gods that live in those levels do not care about us at all. By the term gods, this is a relative word. Meaning, we are not referring to the one [God](#), by which we mean the Absolute. We are not referring to Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. This is not what we are referring to. By “gods” here, if you want to put it in western terms, we can say angels, archangels, we can say like the lower gods of other traditions and mythologies with a lot of gods. It would be the lower gods, not the upper ones. The highest gods in any hierarchal type of religion represent archetypes, aspects of our own Being. For example, Jesus is a master, a [God](#). He represents Christ, which is an archetype in us that we have to develop. Moses is that, too. Odin is that, Quetzalcoatl is that, Buddha himself is that. He is a great [God](#), but he is not one of these gods in this realm. The gods that we talk about here have many levels. That is why I showed you the image of the [Tree of Life](#). It goes into more detail than the Bhavachakra does. In the [Tree of Life](#), you see that the heavens depicted here have nine levels, some say seven, some say nine, some say more than nine. In all of those levels are different levels and classes of gods: Pratyekabuddhas, Shrivakayanas... you have elemental Buddhas and different types of angels, all levels, from simple ones that are not well developed, to highly developed gods, but who nonetheless remain enslaved to the attachment to their position.

The gods are needed. They form the celestial hierarchy. They are necessary. They form a very important role for existence to be present. You see, out of the mouth of Yama emerges the worlds, and the first world that emerges here are the heavens. Similar in the [Tree of Life](#): out of the Absolute emerges [Kether](#), [Chokmah](#), and [Binah](#). This Atziluth. Then, those archetypes (Atziluth) become Briah, then Yetzirah, than Assiah. That unfolding of everything is a process in which gods make it happen and sustain it. They are needed. Nonetheless, they are not fully developed. There are gods at different levels, and are fulfilling their roles, and they remain attached to those places.

There are many classes of beings. There may be elemental Buddhas who are very pure, but have no solar bodies. They may have an [Astral body](#), [Mental body](#), [Causal body](#), they can have those developments and once they have the [Causal body](#) we call them Pratyekas. There are beings who developed the soul, but did not eliminate all of the [ego](#), did not enter the [bodhisattva](#) path, and are on the spiral path and developing over millennia, just fulfilling their role in nature, of being a great king over a certain region with lots of power and wealth. They exist, and they are very beautiful, and have a lot of knowledge that can benefit those who walk the path, but they are also tempting gods. For someone who is entering the path of the [bodhisattva](#), they do not like that. If you studied the Pistis Sophia, or the Mahabharata and certain other classes of scripture, those teachings explain very clearly that the path to the Absolute has two aspects. Most people think there are many different religions, but they all pretty much go back up to [God](#). It is not like that. All these classes of gods and demigods are in these regions of nature and the vast majority are on the spiral path, very slowly and gradually through many incarnations slowly rising.

There is a quick way, a direct way, that is far more difficult, and is absolutely does not correspond to that spiral path. It is the path of the middle, the direct path, the strait path, the path of the [bodhisattva](#). The [demons](#) who are on the path of the left and the saints who are on the path of the right do not understand the ones who walk the path of the middle. Both of them cause problems for the one who is on the path of the middle. If you study the Mahabharata, it is a beautiful example of that, because you see that the Pandava brothers are trapped between the asuras ([demons](#)), the demigods, and the saints, and there is this big war going on, but they are taking the path of the middle, direct to [God](#), serving Krishna, but no one understands them.

Question: [inaudible]

Answer: He is both. Firstly, Yama is symbolic. The main thing to grasp about him is that he is black; in Sanskrit, black is kala, which is the masculine blackness; that is a name of Shiva, who in [Hebrew](#) we call Jah. His wife or feminine counterpart is Kali, who in [Hebrew](#) is called CHavah. Together, they are Kala Kali, or in [Hebrew](#), Jah-Chavah (Jehovah). Now, anybody who has studied Buddhism in some depth will immediately recall the Kalachakra. Kalachakra is one of the high Tantras in Tibetan Buddhism. It is the same thing that we see here but organized differently.

Kala can mean "blackness," and it can also mean "time." He represents [Iod](#) Havah, Kala Kali, Shiva Shakti. He is the body of forces that emerge out of the Absolute, of the dawning. The Absolute is beyond. It is that space that we do not see, the space around. The residual karma from the previous eon must express when the new age emerges, it is that HAAAAA, the Hagal, that rune that expresses out of his mouth. See the Hagal, the six regions formed by the three lines of the three forces. It is that breath of [God](#) that is coming through him. That is [Iod](#) Havah. The is how the forces in Absolute emerge into Atziluth into Briah and cause formation.

What is really important to realize is that it is happening in us. That is why we are here. We need to become cognizant of that in ourselves, and learn how to harness those forces in order to cause the wheel of becoming to be the becoming of a Master or a Buddha, not the becoming of a devil. We are right at the precipice, this humanity, of a really big mistake, a big problem, because desire has gotten so out of control and the karma is so heavy.

Audience: Is this not a snapshot of the past?

Instructor: This is not a snapshot of the past. This wheel is moving. It is always moving. What is causing it to move is the energies that are flowing through you. All of the time. That is the essence of the genuine teaching is: learn to be here and now and use your energy with wisdom and love for others. Restrain your harmful actions in your body, and in your heart, and in your mind. Kill them, and turn that energy in to actions to benefit others. To serve others. To give birth to virtue. That is how "the wheel of becoming" is a better name. What becomes: Samsara or Nirvana. The only difference between the two is what Padmasambhava said: Paying attention. Paying attention and seeing the delusions of the minds.

Let me tell you one more thing quickly. The [demons](#), devils, black magicians, and sorcerers also know how to be present. They know how to use the [Consciousness](#). They know how to use energy to fulfill desires, to have sensations, and experience the things they want to experience. They want to have power. To have whatever it is they want to have. They forget [God](#).

Audience: Are the Gods bound by karma?

Instructor: Everything that exists exists because of karma and is bound by it. There is only one place where cause and effect does not apply, and that is in the Absolute. The reason existence emerges out of the Absolute is because of residual karma that has not yet been completed. That is why we have rising cosmic days and nights like we have days and nights on this planet. The universes, the infinities, also

go through days and nights, and they do that in this great cycle of Samsara because of unresolved karma. When the cosmic night closes, everything goes in to repose, and in that realm there are no actions, so to speak. The residues are there, which cause a disequilibrium, and the cosmic day again and that breath of Hagei emerges, and everything comes back, including the gods.

Think about it this way. Who can create more of an impact? Who has more responsibility for their actions? A baby or an adult? Who will the law say is more responsible: a baby or an adult? Obviously, the adult will have more responsibility, so in this context, we can say the gods are the “adults.” They should know better. We are so to say we children, babies, we are ignorant.

Audience: Is it possible to be a collective emancipation from suffering, or is it individually binding?

Instructor: It is both, in the sense that karma works on many levels. Karma is individual binding, because every energy you put into motion is energy you put into motion. Only you can answer for that. Unless you perform an action that is superior to the first, you will answer for that first action.

In terms of a collective emancipation, it is possible for certain types of karma to be overridden or forgiven and can happen in a collective way, just like it can happen in an individual way. It depends on the nature of the situation, and the karma. If the question is, can this humanity be liberated collectively by being forgiven? The answer is no, it cannot. Humanity has accrued too great a debt, and the law has already passed its judgment, and it is being enacted. Some karma has been forgiven already, and there are certain types of karma that are being forgiven. Put it this way, if in this moment the law demanded that we pay all of our karma, we would not be here anymore.

The more important thing is finding the nature of karma in your experience, your moment-to-moment experience, look at how it functions and watch for the consequences of it, and learn. Do not ignore things. See how things that you do cause consequences in yourself, in your family, in your workplace, in your school, and everywhere you go. Look closely; sometimes it is hard to see, because we have real blinders on. We do not want to see, even though we may be looking right at something, we won't see it. We need to open our eyes and look at things that we say, things that we do, things that we do not say.

For example, one thing that is important to realize about this wheel is that it is a cycle that repeats, and we do that. It is part of our fundamental ignorance. We build habits psychologically, emotionally, and mentally, and repeat ourselves. We developed a way of being and doing things, and we think it is protecting us and helping us, but in fact it is enslaving us to the wheel. We have developed ways in dealing with each other, for example; some of us, when we talk, we yell. We have this habit of always yelling. Some of us, when we talk, we talk so low, that nobody can hear us. We talk so quietly that some say, “What?” It seems insignificant, but it is very significant, because every single conversation that you have is affected by how you talk. I know somebody that is skilled and talented, but is so habitual in the tendency to talk quietly that some people think he does not even speak English. Some people think that he doesn't know anything, and it is simply because of that habit. I know other people that talk so loud that people have all these other impressions of that person that is not true.

Habits. Some of us when there is a conflict, we run away, thinking that there is a conflict, and we do not want to make things worse for them; we want to stay on the side, when actually we may be the one who can solve it, or the one that has the ability to solve the problem and by walking away we make it worse.

Another habit: we see a problem and think “I can fix this” and we go into it and make it worse.

We have all these different habits and tendencies, and we have to understand them. We repeat ourselves, and we are always seeking to repeat our experiences, and repeat pleasures and patterns. That is why we suffer.

Some of our instructors have given us a bit of advice by saying: everyday, do things different. When you drive to work, go a different way. When you walk to the store, walk a different way. When you have to do this or that, change it, do it differently. It is superficial, but causes you to look at things without the habit without being on autopilot; that is what we want: we want to shake up our perceptions, and start to see here and now as though we have never seen it before.

The habitual behaviors are why we suffer. We have to find our own habitual behaviors and break them. We all brush our teeth the same way, we comb our hair the same way, we shower the same way, we dry off the same way, and we dress the same way. Change it. Just to start encouraging yourself to realize that if you have these habits superficially, what kind of habits do you have deeper? How are you interpreting your perceptions of your family, spouse, and children? You are interpreting your perceptions in habitual ways, and you are not seeing reality, and that is why you suffer. To change patterns means to look for things that repeat, and break repetitions. Break them, change them, and do not repeat yourself. Always look for ways to change it. Master Samael would do this all of the time.

He would change his behaviors; he would walk a different way, drive a different way, in order to keep himself from developing those animalistic behaviors. Notice how animals form trails, because they go the same way. We all have those trails in our mind.

Audience: You spoke of different levels of hells, 18, 19 etc. It is said that we have 108 lives; is this related? Also they all reduce to 9, [Yesod](#), can you speak about that in relation to the levels of hell?

Instructor: The levels of hell that are given in every religion are symbolic. Hell is a psychological state, and we will each experience hell in accordance to the state of our psyche, according to our Bhava. All of us are different. We all have pride, anger, and lust. It is individual with each one of us, and our karma is individual in accordance to the actions we performed. That is why when we study the hells, we say in general there are nine hells as depicted in the [Tree of Life](#), while in Buddhism we talk about 18 and different numbers depending on which school you study, the numbers are symbolic. We use the number nine here because of its importance in the tradition. It has a deep significance numerologically and Kabbalistically.

As the question stated, [Yesod](#) is the ninth sphere. The ninth sphere is just above [Malkuth](#) on the [Tree of Life](#). [Yesod](#) is Eden. Eden in [Hebrew](#) means “bliss.” That is the level of energy that is in us that is a blissful form of energy that is the root of creation. If you superimpose this [Tree of Life](#) over the physical body, [Yesod](#) relates to the sexual organs, which is how we create life. That is how these three forces create through us most dramatically: through sex. We create life. People who misuse sex create incredible suffering for themselves and others, suffering which we have no idea yet because we are so asleep. Every psychological manifestation in us is powered by [Yesod](#). It is that energy that is being utilized in the psyche. Liberation also depends on [Yesod](#). Cessation from suffering depends on using those energies for benefit. That is why we say to descend to the ninth sphere. The number nine is symbolic. Our psyche is as deep as our [ego](#) is fat. Each of us has to see that for ourselves to understand that meaning.

We talk about 49 levels of the mind as well. That is also symbolic. Seven bodies times seven chakras equals 49 psychological faces of the same thing.

In relation to the 108 lives, this number is also symbolic. It represents nine cycles of twelve. You see, that number nine comes up a lot. That number nine always points back to sex. $108 (1+0+8=9)$, the ninth sphere, all points back to sexuality, that is the root and core of [Tantra](#): to harness the vital energies and turn them into something for benefit, not lust. This becomes more significant and has more meaning for you if we explained the twelve Nidanas. You see, the 108 lives relates to a repetition of twelve. If you repeat that twelve again and again, you will arrive at the number 108. When we look at these twelve Nidanas, they are sexual. The symbols that are hidden there are sexual. It is because again in those root forces of nature that I explained to you: masculine, feminine, crossed through sex creates. That is the Hagal. That rune that is hidden in these bars that form the six realms. That is the nature of Kala-Kali, Yab-Yum, [Iod](#)-Havah, Adam-Eve, male-female united as one. Sex, [Tantra](#), transmutation. The whole wheel depends on that.

Why do we suffer? Because Adam and Eve were seduced by the forbidden fruit and ate of it and were cast out of Nirvana and entered into Samsara. To return back to Eden, “blissfulness,” we have to rectify the mistake. That is a sexual process; it is a process of making our sexuality pure, divine, a form of ecstasy, of the gods. Not animal, but something that is filled with love untainted by craving, aversion, or ignorance. Instead, it is a reflection of virtue and sacrifice.

Audience: Weren't the angels commanded by [God](#) to serve man and if that is true is not man above the angels?

Instructor: In certain traditions it is stated that angels were created to serve man. We need to understand that scripture in context. What it states there is that the Angels were created to serve Adam. We are not Adam. That primordial Adam is our original inner Bhava, our Atman, our Buddha, or in Tibetan terms our Yidam. It is the source of our Being before the [ego](#), before the fall from Eden, before sin. The “Angels” in that context represent all those hierarchies that manage the forces of nature in order to create existence, which at that time was Edenic, the state of bliss. Adam was put there in order to create his soul. Unfortunately, his soul made a mistake, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell. We see here two levels of Adam: the celestial and the terrestrial. This is what Paul was pointing out in his writings. We have the natural man, who is the heavenly man, the heavenly Adam, and we have the animal man, which is the sinning Adam. If we redeem ourselves from sin, the angels will serve us. The gods will serve us, in the sense that they will manage nature and nature will be here as an environment where we can attain greater levels of development.

Audience: Are angels malevolent or benevolent?

Instructor: Well, it depends, there are different classes of angels. We generally talk about two classes of angels. There are innocent angels, which are the elementals of nature. They are simple angels. They are pure and divine, but they are not well developed, so their level of being is more less the level of animals. Then there are the virtuous angels who have developed some degree of level of being. They have awakened [Consciousness](#). They have awakening development on some particular path in nature. They may have some level of the soul developed. They are not just elementals, they are human beings. Those types of angels are benevolent. They are there to help us according to our karma. We have to earn that help. We have to deserve it.

There are also beings who are related to the lower levels that try to impede our process. We call them black magicians. They are not angels, they are devils, and there are many of them. They will do their best to impede your progress. They often do this by manipulating the innocent angels against us. For example, they use plants and animals through magical procedures in order to cause harm, influence or otherwise pursue their desires. The key is not to become identified with them. Treat them in the same way that you treat every other being. Treat them with respect, with caution, but also with love.

Audience: Having discipline in our spiritual practice versus having habits?

Instructor: We need to have the discipline to do our practices. There is no question about that. What my statements were pointed towards is the habit of the mind to repeat itself mechanically. If you set the discipline for yourself that you will meditate everyday at a certain time, and you do that consciously, good. Do it. We need that discipline, no question about it; we are all very lazy. If we do it mechanically, just because we have to, and while meditating you are thinking about a TV show you were watching, or thinking about this or that problem, then you are wasting your time. You are doing a mechanical habit that will not benefit you at all. That is the difference. What you have to break is the mechanical tendency to repeat. Everyone is different in that way. We have to find our mechanical patterns and change them. The more important ones are the hardest ones to see. If you brush your teeth everyday at 7 o'clock and you change it to 7:15, you are not going to accomplish anything with that type of change. It is very superficial. If you start to realize that there is a person at work that you always deal with in the same way, and there is a dynamic in your relationship that is not good, and then you make the effort to change that by adopting a better attitude, that is very good, because you are breaking a mechanical pattern of behavior in how you relate to others. This is significant, more significant. We also have mechanical patterns in how we have an attitude towards our own divinity. That also must change. Many of us do not believe in [God](#). We might like religion, we might like spirituality and study, but fundamentally and truly we just do not believe. In some ways, who can blame us? We never experienced [God](#), we have no conscious knowledge of [God](#), and no awakened experience of seeing reality. How can we believe in something we never experienced? It is understandable, nevertheless that tendency, the mechanical tendency of doubt, of disillusionment, of the way of critically thinking that "I do not believe in that, or it wont happen to me anyway," or "I do not deserve it," or "[God](#) does not listen to me," is all very negative and very harmful. We need to cultivate a hopeful attitude, an open mind to awaken. If you work sincerely with techniques that we teach, the practices that we teach, but more specifically with awakening from moment to moment, it is inevitable when the conditions and karma allow, you will see reality. It is up to your efforts, compared to your karma, when you will achieve it. Some achieve it the first day, some it takes 10-20 years, and most of us will be in the middle. It will take time to develop equilibrium until one day you will have an experience, then you will have a new surge of enthusiasm from that. It is a very useful experience.

Audience: What does the prefix sa-, samsara, sambhogakaya, and how does that relate to sambhava from his name Padmasambhava?

Instructor: There are a variety of different letters in Sanskrit with that Sa sound; they are all different. Earlier in the lecture I mentioned briefly the term Svabhava. This term was mistranscribed by the person who transcribed the lecture from Samael Aun Weor that he gave many years ago in Spanish. Someone wrote the lecture down, but did not write the word down properly, and it has been that way for 20-30 years. The word was written as if it was [Hebrew](#), but the word does not exist in [Hebrew](#). We were always wondering, "What did he say?" Finally, we found it was the word svabhava, which is a word that appears in many scriptures related with Mahayana Buddhism, particularly with the higher schools that deal with the philosophy of emptiness and Śūnyatā. It also appears in some Sanskrit scriptures. The term means our "innate nature." Sva स्व means "own."

Sa can be स or स, and mean many things depending on the context: "Excellent, bestowing, equality, similarity, sleep, nipple, bird, snake, heaven, paradise, destruction, teacher, learned man, end, loss, rest, wind, loss of knowledge, air, [Meditation](#), embryo, fence, knowledge....."

Audience: What is Sambhava?

Instructor: Padmasambhava literally means “born from the lotus.” Bha, Bhava is “becoming.” Padme is the lotus, and sa is from the embryo, born from.

Audience: I want to pester you about something you repeated several times. You keep saying that Karma does not work or does not apply in the Absolute and yet the Absolute does not just magic itself by its own self [Consciousness](#) it has to go through its own becoming in order to make that happen. It is like what you were saying before and what the other previous speaker said this cosmic day came into manifestation because there was a type of contamination of the atmosphere that caused things to spit out. It seems like there is a law, a cause and effect that applies to the Absolute it is not independent of the Law of Cause in affect.

Instructor: The difference is this Karma itself in the manifested level is the duality of cause and effect. In the Absolute it is unity.

The effect is always present inside the cause. In the Absolute they are not separate.

As he explained and as Gurdjieff talked about, there was a corruption, which is a very deep and philosophical point. In my perspective, it is part of the root conflict amongst certain schools that debate the nature of emptiness. They cannot agree, and it seems to me it is because of that corruption that happened. It is very difficult to grasp.

Audience: I think you might be alluding to the cause of causes, the first cause of everything.

Instructor: The cause of causes, yes.

It is stated in certain treatises that whether the universe is in a state of rest, or a state of manifestation, three things are always there:

- Karma
- Space
- Nirvana

What is not explained there is the state of those three, because that changes. In one state it is unmanifested, in the the other it is manifested. That is the difference. They are always existing, but in a state of non-existence, in a state of unity. The oneness, the Absolute, are the same thing.

Audience: I would like to go back to the six states of samsaric beings and the discussion about angels. In *The Secret Doctrine* by H.P.B. which is based on a Tibetan Buddhist text, there is a doctrine that she talks about that at one time we were all angels and that there were two groups. There was one group that was totally fine with the state that they were at, and the other group that wanted to move forward and the only way to move forward was to come to this three dimensional world of [Malkuth](#) and undergo all the experiences and manipulate matter. So and the primal force of that is this striving to move forward. How is that striving different then the desires that we are trying to kill off?

Instructor: It is important for us to clarify what we mean by desire. In Buddhism and in [Hebrew](#) and in Christian traditions, we have different words that describe different psychological qualities. In English, we call it desire. The English word is terrible, because it only implies for us mostly sex. We hear the word “desire” and we only think of sex. That is partly due to the nature of our psyche, because our psyche is with that Bhava, that animalistic tendency that everything is sexual. By desire in philosophy we do not mean merely sexual desire, and there are different classes of desire that are broken down into different classes. Generally speaking, what we need to understand that is this: there is a difference between the necessity of the soul to realize its unified nature with the Absolute. We can call that a desire for [God](#). In English it is fine, but that is not what we are talking about desire in the form of corruption. Desire in the form of corruption is what in [Hebrew](#) is called rah, which means pollution, sin, evil. The desire to unify with [God](#) is tob, goodness. These are two aspects of the same force: [Daath](#), knowledge. So, the center forces of the Bhavachakra manifest in different ways. When Adam and Eve fell, they were seduced by the desire to know [God](#), which is on the [Tree of Knowledge](#) of Tob ve Rah: goodness and impurity. They were given the instructions. That longing to take that fruit, to smell that fruit, is that longing of the soul to experience something beyond our being, to rise, to know, to have knowledge. That is why it is called the [Tree of Knowledge](#), [Daath](#). Unfortunately, because of Lucifer, the temptation through sensation, Eve (the sexual organs) abused that experience of energy, of matter, of [Consciousness](#) and that force of knowledge was converted into rah (impurity), desire; it became selfish. It became egotistical. If they would have followed the rules, which are the rules given in [Tantra](#) and other traditions, they would have taken that energy, but not indulged in it in an egotistical way, not with ignorance; it would have been a force of Bhava, of becoming. To become like the Elohim, to know the two, but not be victimized, and to not be corrupted. In each tradition it is presented in that way, but in different ways. The Buddha himself also used different technical terms to

explain the different types of desire. Most people do not get that deep into it to know the technical terms. You also find that in Hinduism.

Audience: So you say unfortunately, but really it is fortunately for us that Lucifer did that?

Instructor: The temptation is necessary, but the failure to overcome it is not. Unfortunately, we fail everyday facing a temptation. This again like you pointed out before, this is not a photograph of the past, this is happening right now in all of us, everyday. Everything we perceive is a moment in which we need to transform and overcome temptation, which comes in many ways. Our pride is tempted, our lust is tempted, our fear, envy, jealousy, laziness, our gluttony is always being tempted. We are always being tempted. We have to choose. Choose hope, goodness, virtue, or choose to pollute yourself. Your actions psychologically determine whether you will rise or sink. Only you can decide. That is [Daath](#). Knowledge. Do you see the three there in the animals?

- [Daath](#), knowledge
- Tob, goodness
- Rah, impurity

Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course

Samsara and Nirvana

Written by [Gnostic Instructor](#)

Category: [Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming](#)

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This is a transcription of the audio lecture [Bhavachakra 02 Samsara and Nirvana - AUDIO](#) originally given live on Gnostic Radio, which you can download for free. There is also an accompanying PDF: [Bhavachakra 02 Samsara and Nirvana - PDF](#)

In our previous lecture, we discussed a very important subject in all Asian religions and mystical traditions, and that is a philosophical concept called bhavachakra. This philosophical concept forms the foundation for understanding all Asian mysticism. But, unfortunately in the West, this part of the philosophy has been very poorly taught. People know this aspect of Eastern philosophy and religion as the Wheel of Samsara, but this is inaccurate. If that were an accurate translation it would be called samsarachakra, but it is not. It is called bhavachakra.



Bhava (भाव) is a Sanskrit word that means “becoming.” It implies activity, movement, something with potential for change. Samsara (संसार), on the other hand, means “cycle, cyclic, repetitious, life, course, going, wandering,” which does not imply the possibility of dramatic change, but implies repetition of the same thing with maybe minor variations, but which is nonetheless a repetition.

It is important to have this distinction in mind, because the bhavachakra or the Wheel of Becoming is a conceptual illustration of ourselves, of our own mind. This is the other area where this teaching has been poorly understood in the West. Students of Asian philosophy and religion wrongly interpret the wheel as something only external, something literal, something physical, and perhaps something that applies to other dimensions that are outside of us – dimensions that we may abide within or transmigrate through, but only with the distinction between myself and place / location, and this is wrong. This is an incorrect understanding of bhavachakra. The truth is that this wheel provides a conceptual basis for understanding our own mind, and it is our own mind that determines where we reside in the universe. This is the critical difference. It is our own mind that determines our experience

of life. So, to understand that, we will deepen the topics that we explored in the previous lecture. We will go into the study or analysis of samsara and nirvana.

Two Truths

In order to understand ourselves better, and in order to understand the bhavachakra with some degree of accuracy, the first thing to grasp is that Buddhist philosophy describes two truths. In synthesis, we can really say that there is one truth. We can say that there is an ultimate truth, the fountain from which everything that is, that was, or that will be has flowed. But that single truth is not understood or perceived by any of us. We perceive something, and from our point of view there are certain “realities,” but they are only relative, not absolute. So these are the two truths:

1. Ultimate truth
2. Relative or conventional truth

In order to help us understand what this means, and to approach the perception of that single ultimate truth, in philosophy we talk about these two truths as a way for us to bridge the gap. It is quite simple to understand what this means.

In this type of teaching, which we call Gnostic, what we are seeking is truth, not as a concept or as a philosophy, but as an experience, something that we ourselves have known. That is what [Gnosis](#) means: to know because one has experienced it, not just because we heard it, or read it in a book, but because it is something that we have touched, tasted, seen, felt, lived through. This is [Gnosis](#). So that ultimate truth is [Gnosis](#) itself, and in other traditions it is called jhana (Sanskrit). In Tibetan, it is called rigpa. In Greek, noia, [Gnosis](#). “Knowledge” is a superficial English translation of this word [Gnosis](#), but it does not convey the accurate meaning because, in English, we think knowledge is anything you get out of a book, put it in your intellect, and then you think you “know” something. Or, somebody told you about A, B, and C, so now you think you “know” A, B, and C, but this is a delusion. It is comparable to the person who has read many books about New York, and can tell you everything there is to know about New York, and is convinced he is an authority on New York, but has never been there. That person is a fool. When it comes to religion, we are all like that. We all think we know about religion, spirituality, [God](#), etc. but we really do not know anything. We have many beliefs and ideas, but no experience of divinity.

It is important to have this type of sincerity, to really fundamentally analyze what we know as true, if we are ever to approach the truth itself, because if we think we know something, we will not seek to know its reality. We need to first recognize we do not know, otherwise we will remain ignorant. The term ignorance means to “not know.” So we are all in a state of ignorance, because we do not know [God](#), Buddha, Atman. We have theories and beliefs, but we really do not know. We do not have [Gnosis](#).

Ultimate Truth

Divinity is the ultimate truth, [Gnosis](#), and in other philosophical terms we can call it shunyata (Sanskrit), Brahma, Adi Buddha, Samantabhadra, the Absolute, the Ain Soph, the Emptiness, the Illuminating Void, the Clear Light. All of these terms describe the fundamental basis of everything that does exist, and in that fundamental basis is in the state of non-existence. The Absolute simply is. It does not depend on anything for its existence. This is why this ultimate truth is so hard to grasp, because it is something beyond the capacity of the intellect to understand.



The Absolute as depicted in Buddhism: Adi-buddha, Samantabhadra, the Primordial Source of Everything.

The Absolute, the Void, is the pure state of becoming, a state of archetypes in which there is not but there will be. There is no measure. There is no height, width, or depth. There is no concept, no thought. There is no feeling, no emotion. There is no “I”, no self, but there is something. There is joy. There is love. There is brilliant understanding, cognizance, and wisdom. This state of existence, or non-existence, is the true nature of all things, but we do not see it. We are buried under layers and layers and layers of habitual tendencies that cloud our perception and prevent us from seeing the nature of the ultimate truth. What we perceive is conventional truth, relative truth.

Conventional Truth

The term conventional truth describes everything that we perceive in our current state (asleep). We can say that the physical world "exists," so this is conventionally or relatively true. It is relative because the physical world does not exist permanently or independently. Similarly, our body exists in a relative sense, but it is not lasting or independent. So, it is "relatively real."

Most importantly, we have this mistaken perception about ourselves. We believe our sense of self is real and lasting, but it is neither. We are very far from knowing our true identity. but which does not have independent existence.

We mistakenly believe that what we perceive is real and lasting, but nothing is. Everything we see in our current state of [Consciousness](#) is impermanent and interdependent—not independent. Nothing exists on its own. Everything that depends on causes and conditions is considered "relatively real."

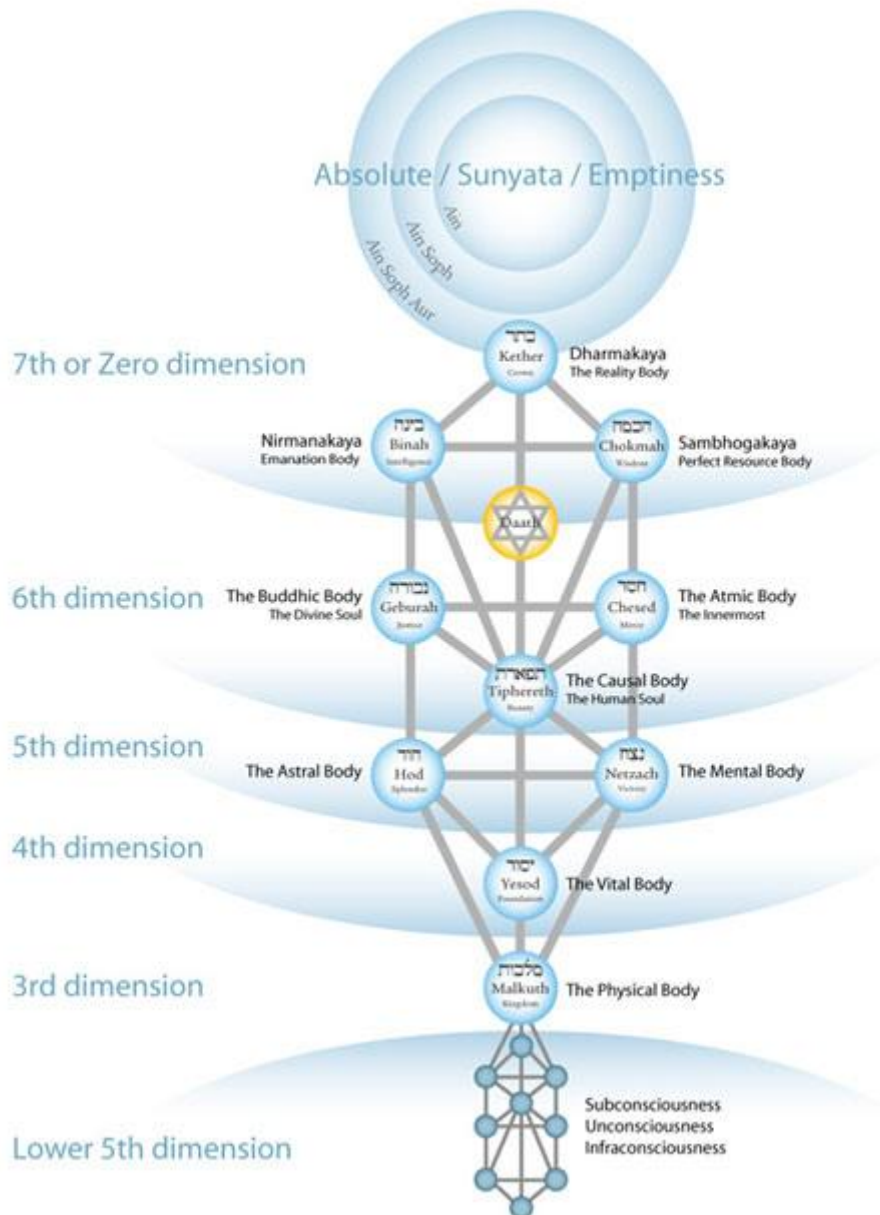
So here are the two truths: the ultimate truth, which is the Ain Soph, which is Samantabhadra, the Adi-Buddha, the emptiness, the Void. That is the ultimate truth. We do not see it. We only see the relative truth, that which we perceive here and now with our five senses and our mind.

These two truths are very important to understand, because we mistakenly assume that what we perceive is real and is the extent of reality. We are wrong. It is easy to prove even in superficial ways. If you really question what you perceive, what you think, if you really analyze yourself, you can quickly see that what you “see” is a lie, and that what you think, feel, and believe is not true, and is an illusion.

The [Tree of Life](#)

This is why we study the [Tree of Life](#). This image or graphic merely symbolizes these two truths. Obviously, this graphic looks quite complex when we are not well versed in its intricacies, but really it is quite simple. It does map external worlds and dimensions, but that is not our primary interest.

Studying the external worlds does not lead us to freedom from suffering. Only studying ourselves can do that, so we need to study this graphic in relation with our own mind.



The two truths are depicted here. Everything from the sephirah [Kether](#) downwards represents degrees of relative truth. The ultimate truth, the reality itself, is the Absolute, the emptiness, which is shown at the top of the graphic.

There is a misconception that is very easy to have about this type of teaching and about this type of philosophy, and in particular regarding graphics like this. We, without realizing it, interpret this type of teaching in the same way we have interpreted our traditional religions, assuming that this graphic represents worlds that are outside of us, and that heaven, or the lands of perfection, are somehow “above” us. So we always raise our hands and point to the sky, and the graphic appears to show it that way, as though somehow the Absolute is “up there.” This is a wrong understanding. It is “up there,” but not only up there. The truth is that this diagram is just an illustration of something that you need to work with with your imagination in order to understand.

The Onion as an Example

This graphic disarranges and pulls apart an onion, and that onion is you. The outer skin, the paper of that onion, is everything that you can see about yourself right now. What you see about yourself now is the most superficial and fragile part of the onion. You can barely touch it and it will tear. That is your personality and your body. They are very weak, very unreliable, just like onion skin. An onion skin is impermanent, and moreover, it is inedible. You cannot rely on it, you cannot use it, and it will not nourish you. It has its place, but it is limited in its usefulness. The onion skin protects what is inside. So, our “onion skin” is the sephirah [Malkuth](#), which means “the kingdom.” It relates to our physicality.

All the other Sephiroth represented on this graphic are the layers of the onion, many layers inside. This graphic is a simplified representation of the truth. It is simplified for our mind because our mind cannot comprehend the reality, even if it is relative, we cannot because our minds are weak. In order to really understand the truth, we need to use the [Consciousness](#).

So, one could then think that by way of this analogy, if the Absolute is at the top of the graphic, then that must be the center of the onion. Yet, this is not so. Inside the atoms of every layer of the onion is the Emptiness: the Absolute. Even inside the skin, the paper around the onion, the Absolute is in that, too. The Absolute is not just in the very center of the onion. It is fundamental ground of the onion itself. Everything about that onion is derived from space, empty. If you take a very powerful scientific tool and you look very closely and you zoom in and zoom into that onion, you will see the skin, you will see the fibers. Go deeper and deeper you will see all the minerals and elements, and when you go deeper and deeper, you will reach empty space. You will reach the atoms between which and within which is nothing. It is empty. That is like the Absolute. Yet, when we are talking about the Absolute, we are not talking about a lack of something. “Space” or “void” implies a lack of something, but that is not what the Absolute is. Rather, the Absolute is the very fabric of existence. It is in the heart, in every layer, in the skin. It is around it, it is within it. It is everything that gives the possibility of an onion to be. Each layer of the onion exists because of the space, because of the other layers, because of the atoms, molecules, fluids, and—significantly—because of the constant process of death, birth, and sacrifice: the ability for things to change. Each thing is sustained because other things died, were sacrificed, in order to give life. So, the existence of this cycle of things, and the space it happens within, is bhava, “becoming.” That onion is in a constant process of change. It is not stagnant, it is constantly changing. We are like that. This graphic represents that.

Emptiness

The [Tree of Life](#) is illustrated with the Absolute at the top just as an illustration, but in reality it is completely inaccurate, because every Sephirah is the Absolute condensed at its level, manifested and particularized at its level, and within it is the Emptiness. Physically speaking, your physical body is like this. Physically, just with the relation with the matter and energy of the body, if you look deep enough, you will find nothing. Really, the body is empty. There is nothing there, but we think it is real. Most importantly, every manifested thing arises, sustains briefly, then passes away. That is, everything is impermanent, and depends upon other things in order to exist. Thus, another way of explaining Emptiness is to talk about Dependent Origination.

Emptiness is not an empty space. Emptiness means “lacking inherent existence.” That is, everything depends on everything else.

In the first degree of understanding the two truths is to understand that all things have this emptiness in their very make-up, their very nature. But this is only the beginning of understanding what these two truths mean. This is just the conceptual basis of it. It goes deeper. This is why Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist teacher, stated:

“Those who do not understand emptiness will fail to achieve liberation. Thus, ignorant beings wander helplessly in the prison of the six cyclic existences.”

We explained those six realms in the previous lecture: the realms of the Gods, demi-gods, the humans, the animals, the hungry ghosts, and those in hell. Those realms are outside of us, but are also psychological, inside of us. We are a bhavachakra. Those realms represent aspects of our own psyche. We are in the wilderness—even the Bible stated this. Once we abused the fruit of the [Tree of Knowledge](#), we went into the wilderness to suffer. We are now suffering. We are wandering helplessly in the prison of our mind. That prison is not the physical world, it is not the physical body, it is the mind. That is the prison that causes us to suffer, and we are trapped in that prison because of our ignorance. We are ignorant beings. Remember, this term ignorance does not refer to book study, or having learned in a school. It is to lack knowledge of the truth, to lack experience of reality. To ignore, to lack knowledge.

This is so because we do not understand emptiness, and thus we will fail to achieve liberation. This is a simple fact. This is why we see so few beings achieving liberation from suffering. If you really contemplate this, it is heartbreaking. This is not just philosophical or conceptual. This has to do with the exact experience in this moment of every being that exists everywhere, and this is part of our delusion. We study these teachings, we read, we study the scriptures, we hear the lectures, we consider ourselves to be a spiritual person making our efforts, but really, our efforts are all about ourselves: we are fundamentally selfish, ignorant. Even in our so-called spiritual life, we are really thinking only about ourselves. We pursuing spiritual studies and practice, we tend towards building a philosophical

point of view or spiritual point of view that is saturated with a sense of self, with what “I” want, with what “I” need, with what “I” know, with “me”, and this is why we suffer. It is wrong view. It causes suffering for ourselves and others.

Millions of people study Buddhism and the teachings about the Emptiness, yet how many of them have achieved liberation? Remember" liberation does not happen in the future. Liberation is an experience of [Consciousness](#), right now. If we are not liberating ourselves now, we never will. It is important to have a conceptual understanding of the teachings, because this clarifies the path we must walk. But the conceptual understanding is not liberation itself. Many people fail to realize this. Many believe that having a concept is the same as having the experience. This is a delusion. In fact, if we are not yet liberated, then we suffer from this delusion in our own way, and it is highly likely that we are unaware of it. That is why we are still trapped in cyclical existence: we do not see the causes of our suffering.

Let us contemplate this for a moment:

“...ignorant beings wander helplessly in the prison of the six cyclic existences.”

I know I said that we primarily need to study this in relation with ourselves. But in order to do that effectively, we need to comprehend our place in the scheme of things. This ignorance that we suffer from is the lack of perception of reality, and it begins because we incorrectly perceive ourselves. We think we know who we are and what we are, but we do not. We cannot even remember that we are in the physical body. We forget that. We are constantly daydreaming. We are never here and now, present, actively engaged with all of the sensations that flow in through our five senses, and through our [Consciousness](#), and the intellect, and the heart. We are rarely actively perceiving those things, those impressions. This shows our ignorance. Moreover, what we do perceive we always relate to selfishly. “What am I getting from it? What am I not getting from it?” Anything we perceive we relate to in this way, and this is fundamentally wrong. It is a cause of suffering. We explained all this in the previous lecture.

Furthermore, in this mode of perception we are making the subtle assumption that we are an individual and that we will be like this, and that we are a permanent being, we will not die. We are wrong. We will die. We do not know when, we do not know how. We think this body will last. It will not. We think our name, our face, our reputation will last. They will not.

We forget everyone else that exists because we are so focused on ourselves. We think we are the center of the universe. Every thought we have, every feeling we have, is really self-centered. Even when we are doing something for someone else, we only do it insofar as it does not inconvenience us, or we perceive that we will gain something that we want from doing it. We are selfish, self-centered, deluded, ignorant of the truth.

What is the truth? It is that absolutely everything in us down to the smallest possible particle is dependent on other things. Nothing about us exists independently. We have the delusion of independence, but it is a lie. Not a single speck of dust in us is independent.

Everything we eat, drink, wear, perceive, and even think, believe, and feel, is dependent. Yet, we do not recognize this. We believe we are independent, individual, isolated.

Let us consider this for a moment before we go on, because this is very important. The reality is the truth. If we analyze our self-perception in light of this concept of the two truths, we need to understand something. Firstly, the universe is huge. Become aware in this moment of your stature in relation with the planet... with the solar system... with the universe.

Now look at how you have been seeing yourself up till now today: in the cage of your mind, thinking, unaware of anything else. Realize you have been in this cage of your mind, distracted, thinking and thinking and thinking, without any real awareness of anything outside of that. First recognize that, because we all do it.

Reflect for a moment that you have always done that and that fundamentally it has never improved your life.

Furthermore, 97% of everything that you thought today is a thought you already had. 97% of what you have felt, what you have wondered about or imagined or daydreamed or wished for, you already thought about or felt or daydreamed about maybe earlier today, maybe yesterday, maybe the day before.

97% of everything you experienced, psychologically, is a repetition. Personally, I find this very distressing, but I cannot deny it because it is a fact. And if it is a fact, it shows that the direction that I have been going is not changing. This is also distressing. Yet, we need to see the truth.

In our tradition, we speak sincerely about our spiritual work, our psychological work. We need to look at things in this sort of stark truth. So let us put that in perspective.

If with this awareness we then suddenly realize, “Wait a minute, why do I need to be thinking all the time, feeling all the time, if I am just repeating myself all the time? Maybe there is another way?” And there is, and this is the nature of the path. There is a way. That is why we need to understand what bhavachakra means. There is a way to stop the cycle of repeating and repeating and repeating. The way is simply to become aware. But this awareness is not what we currently know as awareness. The awareness that cuts through samsara, circling, is something profound. When the circling pattern of perception is severed, nirvana, "cessation," is revealed.

Nirvana: Cessation

“Enveloped by the darkness of many thoughts,
Overcome by madness as if struck by lightning,
Stained by impurity such as lust and the like,
All of which are difficult to prevent—
Such a mind is indeed samsara,” said Vajradhara.

“One achieves liberation by realizing
The mind’s nature is lucid clarity.
He who is unstained by lust and the like,
Who is without any duality of subject and object,
This superior enlightened mind
Is defined as supreme nirvana.” - The Samputa

You see, that ultimate truth, the Absolute, the Void, is pure awareness, unconditioned. It is cognizance, beyond even the level of what we would call a [God](#). We call it the Absolute because it is the ultimate root of everything, even the Gods, even universes, and that is inside of us, not outside. That level of mind is inside of you, not outside of you, and you will not find it tomorrow, and you will not find it in the past. You can only find it right now, in the moment. The only way to find it is to disengage from the cycle, which is a psychological process. To disengage yourself from the wheel of repetition, which is inside of you, your mind, your heart, your body.

So let us do that. Right now.

A Pause to Reflect

Be aware of being in the body.

Relax. Observe.

We begin always with observing ourselves; we are the subject of our observation. So we observe ourselves, we become aware of being here and now. We also observe what is around us, our environment, we look at objects. We just look to see what is there: To not make assumptions, to not project anything, to not label anything, but merely to look. To look and recognize everything you can perceive right now, without adding anything, without taking anything away. Just look. Listen. Feel. Be sensitive and receptive to all the information that is coming in through your senses, five physical senses and the mind, [Consciousness](#). Be receptive to all of that information, all at the same time, without thinking, reacting, analyzing, comparing, judging, evaluating. It is as simple as that! Sounds easy? For us it is not, because the mind is very habitual. The mind wants to keep repeating thinking and feeling and wondering and questioning and doubting, and when it does that, disengage. Let it do whatever it is doing, do not let it take you. It is like a current of a river, let it flow past. It is as if you are just watching a cloud in the sky, but instead of watching a cloud, you are watching the room that you are in, and you are watching your mind. You see that everything is slowly changing, or quickly changing, but you do not need to get involved or get distracted. You simply watch.

This simple awareness, uncontrived, unconditioned, is the only gateway to liberation from suffering. There is no other door. That door is here, being here and now. Observing, always. That is the door to being free from suffering. That is the door to real knowledge: awareness, [Consciousness](#), cognizance. So starting with that fundamental point of view, let us also be aware of everything in our environment. For this, you may need to start using a little bit of your imagination. Expand your awareness out. Become aware of everything you can, not only yourself in whatever posture you have, however you feel, intellectually or emotionally or physically. Begin to expand out and perceive everything that you can perceive: the reality, the room you are in, the sounds you hear, the things you see, what you feel on your body. Expand that awareness.

This is the purpose of these teachings. It is to expand our awareness. To break free of that condition of only being aware of our selfish habits, and to begin to become aware of what is actually happening, inside and outside, but mostly inside. Now, with a little bit of imagination, expand that awareness further to, let us say, a city block. You, more or less, must have some idea of where you are and what

is in the area. So expand that awareness out to what you saw before you arrived where you are. Let us say you came to a classroom or a room in your house. What is in the environment outside of that? Be aware of yourself in relation to that. There is a lot going on in that space, a hundred meters from you in a circle, all the way around you. What is there? What is going on? Where are you? How important are you in that perspective? Less important than when you were only focused on yourself. So let us expand that further. Imagine the city that you are in. Imagine all the people, all the animals, all the plants, the insects, the microbes, everything. Expand that further to the country, to the millions of people, all of whom are not aware of you at all, and do not care about you at all. They only care about their own desires, their own sufferings, and their own cravings. They are ignorant. They are suffering.

Now become aware that this whole planet is like that. Billions of humanoids, who are in that state now that you were just in a few minutes ago, but now you are trying to break free of by expanding your awareness. But the other 6 or 7 billion people are not. Be aware of that. Be aware that you are only one amongst an immense crowd, no different from anyone else. No better, no worse. Expand that more.

This planet is not that big, there are other planets here. There are other solar systems. There are other galaxies. Do you feel small? Can you conceptualize for a moment how many beings exist? The mind breaks with the effort. It is too immense, and we are too insignificant and we do not like to think that. We want to feel important. We want to feel as though we are the center of the universe, but the fact is, we are not. We are only one of an uncountable number of beings. Many of them more developed than us, many less developed than us. Very few have escaped the wheel, but it is possible.

This exercise should bring up a sense of awe, and also a powerful feeling of compassion for the uncountable, suffering beings. We should feel love.

If this simple exercise brought a new sense of awareness or feeling, then remember: if a moment of mere awareness can change how you feel, imagine what is possible if you sustain that awareness!

Discouragement and Timeliness

This type of practice or exercise should not lead you to feel discouraged. It should lead you to start to become aware of the truth, that is, to put your [ego](#) in perspective. If you feel overwhelmed or discouraged, realize that your situation is not hopeless, because the method to escape the wheel is now available to this humanity freely like it never has been before. So, even though we are insects in the scheme of things (no offense intended, but we really are just insects), we actually now on this planet for the first time in our history have access to protected teachings that were never available. Even just a few decades ago, anyone who revealed it would have been killed. This is extraordinary. It is the first time in the history of this planet for the teachings to be available like this. We have access to so many teachings from so many important masters, that we must take advantage. Right now is our opportunity, and it will not last.

It is important to reflect on this, because we are still trapped in samsara. Expanding our awareness and expanding our understanding does not free us from liberation. It only gives us perspective of where we are. Freedom from suffering, to be liberated, requires that we cut the cycle, that samsara stops. Nirvana means that: cessation. We explained this in the previous lecture. Nirvana is not just a place, it is a state of being, a state of being that you have to experience to understand. You can believe in nirvana as much as you want, but it means nothing unless you are experiencing nirvana right now, because to abide in nirvana, your [Consciousness](#) must vibrate at that level. We are here in the world now because this is the level of our psychology. We are here stuck with everybody else because this is where we belong. I know we all want to be free and we all like to think that “we are great beings from the past who just by accident got stuck here with all these animals, but really we are better and we deserve to be in heaven, there was some kind of calculation mistake, or somebody overlooked something or maybe we are just paying a little bit of karma that we owe and soon we will be back up there in heaven with our friends.” You are lying to yourself. That is a delusion. We are where we are because we deserve it, because that is our level.

Our life is a reflection of our psychology. To live in nirvana, you must be psychologically in that level. We can achieve it now.

Samsara

Padmasambhava, who brought [Tantra](#) into Tibet stated:
 “Samara is your mind’s deluded form.”



Padmasambhava

This is a very direct statement by a very great master, a very well developed [bodhisattva](#), truly an incredible being. *“Samsara is your mind’s deluded form.”* Thus, samsara is not outside of you. It is you, until you change.

He said in another scripture:

“Samsara, ‘circling’, is to spin from one place to another. Nirvana is to have cut through this circling.”

Let me emphasize again that the place he is referring to is not physical, it is psychological. Where are you psychologically right now, in your life? What is your level of being? To change that, you have to cut through your habitual behaviors in your mind. If you do not change your psychological tendencies, you will not escape samsara, you will not be liberated. It does not matter what you believe, it does not matter how much money you give to a church, or how faithful you are to your teacher, or how many books you memorized and studied, or how great a lecturer you are, or how much you do for humanity. If you do not cut your psychological tendencies, you will remain in samsara. No exceptions. This is just how nature works. This is why in the Gospels it states:

“Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” - John 8

This is pointing out the cyclical nature of our behaviors. When we perform wrong action, we become enslaved to it, it develops a habit. That is samsara.

“The world is led by the mind.

The mind does not see itself;

Good or bad action is caused by the mind.

It revolves like a fire wheel,

Moves like waves,

Burns like a forest fire,

Widens like a great river.” - Ratnamegha-sutra

So, this is the wheel, the bhavachakra, and the previous lecture we described the center, two rings, and also the six realms around them. The outer ring has twelve stages which are called *nidānas* in Sanskrit. **Nidāna** means cause, foundation, source or origin. It was explained in that lecture that the axis of the wheel is represented as three animals, which are very deep in their implications and meanings in our psychology. That is the Law of Three, the Trinity, the power of creation, which unfortunately in us has become the power of destruction. It is the axle of the wheel of our suffering, and again, this is not outside of us, it is inside of us.



Those three animals represent ignorance, craving, and aversion, and because of the motion of those forces in our psyche, cause and effect are enacted or empowered because of our ignorance, because of our craving, because of our aversion we cause harmful effects, which is that second wheel. Good and bad, but nonetheless deluded. Sometimes we do good things, sometimes we do bad things, sometimes we do things that are, more or less, neutral. But, nonetheless, since they emerge from the state of fundamental ignorance about reality, particularly our inner reality, we bind ourselves to this wheel. So, Buddhism explains that process as these twelve stages, *nidānas*, causes, which originate from that central core in our mind, in our perception, in wrong transformations of what we perceive. I am not going to take the time to explain those twelve stages. They are very well explained in many Buddhist texts. You can study them, and I recommend it; they are very useful. They are particularly useful if you meditate because they point out very subtle interactions that happen in us psychologically that when you become aware of them, it gives a tool to cut through the cycle. Today I want to focus on one. Really, it is the foundation of the cycle.

Ignorance

We explained these three animals represent craving and aversion, and the dynamic that happens between them. They are really only able to function because of the first, which is ignorance. If you can cut ignorance, you can cut the movement of the entire wheel.

The first nidāna on the Tibetan versions of these graphics is represented as a blind man. So this graphic shows you one painting of that blind man. That blind man represents us, psychologically, how we are as a [Consciousness](#), stumbling through our lives without any awareness of reality, not seeing the truth, not seeing the steps in front of us, but instead, fully and completely distracted by a wrong perception of everything.



In Sanskrit, ignorance is avidya. In Tibetan, marigpa. In Greek, agnoia (ἄγνοια). All of these mean the same thing: to “not know”. This is not a knowing of books, a knowing of philosophy, a knowing of a religion. It is a “not knowing” through perception. It is not seeing, and not cognizing.

You see, it needs to be understood like this because most of us have studied religion or philosophy in some way. Most of us have some sense of what ethics are. I do not mean morality, I mean ethics.

Nonetheless, even having those concepts or beliefs, we do not know them because we always contradict them, especially when we feel we will gain something that we desire. A simple example is an addict “knows” that their addiction is harmful. They have been told, they have heard it, they even have observed in their lives how their addiction is hurting them. But they do not stop because they do not have [Gnosis](#) of it. They do not have real knowledge. If they really knew, they would never touch that addiction; they will not even be tempted. There will be no temptation at all. No desire, no craving, no curiosity. So if we talk about alcohol, for example, or cigarettes, an addict may know that it is harmful and may go through a terrible mental conflict about it (or not), but still succumb to the craving and justify it in many different ways to themselves and to others. Someone who has cognizance (conscious knowledge) of the damage that the addiction is causing will not even have an atom of attraction to that element, to the cigarette or the drink. They will have no interest in it. That cigarette or that drink could just be a piece of paper or a rock. It would be that meaningless.

This is important because all of us are addicts, and not just substances outside of the body. We are addicts to our habits, psychologically. All of us are addicted to pride, each of us in our own way. We are addicted to feeling better than others. We are addicted to praise. Some of us are addicted to being

blamed and cursed and rejected. Some of us are addicted to feeling like an outcast or feeling like a martyr, while others are addicted to feeling like a hero. Some are addicted to feeling left out, some to being included. Some are addicted to being ignored, and some are addicted to getting attention. We have to find our psychological addictions. We are addicted to pride, to lust, to envy, to gluttony, to greed, to laziness.

This is why we suffer. This is why we are in a state of ignorance. We have our awareness so bottled up and conditioned; we have no knowledge of anything outside of the addictions. We are constantly caught in a stream of harmful thinking, repetitive, cyclic, psychological factors. Worrying, wondering, remembering, imagining, desiring, avoiding. Never here and now, simply being. We are always trying to modify our external environment in order to satisfy an unquenchable internal craving, and we will never succeed. We never have, we never will. We have to cut the cycle. We cut it by being here and now by acquiring knowledge, by renouncing the mind, the desires, the thoughts, the feelings.

In one of the Tantras it says:

“Ignorance gives rise to external form. Purged of ignorance, samsara becomes nirvana.” - Hevajra-[Tantra](#)

This is a very powerful statement and deserves to be reflected on. “*Ignorance gives rise to external form*”. This alone is so far beyond our ability to understand because we are so habitual in our method of perception. We cannot even conceive of what this means. Our ignorance is so deeply layered that this makes no sense. We are so habitual in our assumption that what we perceive physically is real. We do not actually understand that what we perceive physically is an illusion. An illusion. We perceive life and think it is real. We perceive our thoughts, which are more subtle, and we think they are real too, and our emotions, and sensations in the body.

“The reflection of form in a mirror is an image without substance. [...] The perception of external phenomena as reality is caused by diverse thoughts rooted in the psychic residue of past lives. This is the transitory mind. It creates all forms. What appears to be external reality is actually nonexistent [like the images in a mirror]. The seeming self within the body experiencing the senses is only the mind...” - Lankavatara-sutra

We ignore the two truths. We do not remember that form is emptiness and emptiness is form. This is the essential for us of the Prajnaparamita, the scripture that explains the nature of the Absolute.

"Shariputra, any noble son or noble daughter who so wishes to engage in the practice of the profound perfection of wisdom should clearly see this way: they should see perfectly that even the five aggregates are empty of intrinsic existence. Form is emptiness, emptiness is form; emptiness is not other than form, form too is not other than emptiness. Likewise, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and [Consciousness](#) are all empty. Therefore, Shariputra, all phenomena are emptiness; they are without defining characteristics; they are not born, they do not cease; they are not defiled, they are not undefiled; they are not deficient, and they are not complete.” - [Prajnaparamita Sutra](#)



Prajnaparamita represented in symbolic form

Form and emptiness, these are the two truths, which are really one truth. When we understand this, when we perceive it, when we see it, when we experience it; that is nirvana. It is the perception of reality. It is to cut through the cycle, the habit, the tendencies. This structure of the Wheel of Becoming illustrates how form and emptiness interact, that everything that becomes is in itself empty.

Interdependence

So, one way to present this teaching, and one way that it is often taught (a very useful way), is to understand that the teaching of the twelve nidānas is also called dependent origination. A simpler term is, simply, interdependence. That teaching essentially explains: What is the cause of everything? What is the source or origin of everything? Where is it to be found? All of us assume that this question is addressed at physical matter: Where did the rocks come from? Where did the plants come from, the animals, everything else? That is how we read the Bible, too. We think “[God](#) created everything in six days and he rested on seventh day and that is all.” This literal interpretation is nonsense. What Genesis explains is the origin of existence, the origin of ourselves, the origin of what we see, of what we experience, but the scripture is not literal, it is symbolic.

To comprehend the two truths is to understand that everything in the relative truth is interdependent. I explained that the ultimate truth is the Absolute. It is more than just a void or a space, it is cognizance, it is [Gnosis](#), it is wisdom, it is the origin and root of the Divine. It is selfless. Everything that emerges or that is in existence came from that. So everything that exists only exists because of that.

Furthermore, everything that exists outside of that is impermanent, cannot be relied on, will decay, will pass away.

So, let us look at that in terms of ourselves, to understand how this affects us practically, in terms of our suffering, in terms of our lives. What does it mean? It means look at yourself. Look at how you perceive, what you are experiencing, what you see, what you sense. In everything that is perceptible to you, can you find anything permanent? Anything that is independent? Anything that does not rely on something else?

Well, we assume that our body is real and that it lasts and that it is permanent, but we are mistaken. The body is impermanent; everything about it is unreliable, uncertain.

What about the personality? Because we all believe we are such and such a person with this name and this experience and these tastes and this knowledge, and we are really good at these things and we can really help people with this and that, and we have a lot of confidence in something that is an illusion, something that we will throw away the moment the body is dead. That name and face that we are attached to is only one of thousands that we had, but we do not remember. We are in a state of complete ignorance about who we really are. The personality we have, the name that we have, is dependent on particular causes and conditions in our life that have since changed, gone away.

Everything that created this personality is no longer there as it was, and the personality itself has changed continually, and it will die.

So who is that person that we think we are? What about all those thoughts and feelings that we think are our identity? What happened to them? Are they still there? Are we real? Do we have a fundamental existence beyond the assumption that we are real? We think our thoughts are real, but we do not know where they come from or where they go. We think that our thinking is our identity, but we cannot even control our thinking, and we think that our emotions are our identity, our reality, but we cannot control our emotions either.

Moreover, our thoughts and feelings, even though we ourselves cannot control them, somebody outside of us can control them very easily. We are very easy to manipulate. You do not believe me? Remember when you were standing in line and you ordered something and the person was not bringing it for a long time and you were getting really upset? That is weakness: impatience, anger, pride. Even a child can make you angry, can manipulate you to get what it wants. It knows your buttons. It knows that all it has to do is cry and make a lot of noise, and you will do anything to make it stop. You will give him the keys to the car even though he is only 5 years old... “just shut up!” That is how easy we are to manipulate.

Moreover, any advertisement that we see, any TV show that we see, is a subtle but very powerful influence that causes us to modify our behavior all the time.

What about this so-called “individuality” that we worship today? We all think we have our own style, our own flavor, and our own ways of doing things. We think that we are distinct and individual and we stand out from the crowd, when in fact every single detail about ourselves we took from someone else. Everything. Those who think they dress different just copied someone else. Moreover, their desire to be different depends on the person they are comparing themselves to. So they are not independent. They are dependent on the one they do not want to be like.

Do you see the interdependence? And these are really superficial examples. We are not even looking into the depths of the mind yet. These are just related to [Malkuth](#), the skin of the onion.

We are not free. We have this illusion of individuality, thinking “I am myself. I do not need anyone. I am my own man or my own woman. I am going to go my own way.” This is a profound state of ignorance. Not a single being on this planet is independent, and if you want to prove it, do not depend

on anyone else for anything. You will have to raise and grow and make your own food, your own clothes, your own water. You will have no electricity. You will not have an iPhone. You will not have a car. You will not have shoes, unless you make them. You can live that way if you want, but you will not like it. It will be very difficult. So: independence is an illusion.

Everything about us is dependent on everyone else, and dependent on the nature of our experience in the world. We are very vulnerable and very foolish. A micron difference in the chemical constitution of our atmosphere would cause all of us to be dead, or the chemical composition of the water supply, or the position of the planet in relation with the sun or the moon. We would be dead, we would not be here. There is such a delicate balance to everything. This is especially true in relation with our own psyche.

All of these things are important, and I am presenting them to you in order for you to start to cultivate this sense of self-doubt, or skepticism about your mind and about your perception.

The way to walk in [Gnosis](#) is to question what you perceive, to not believe it, to cut through it, to be awake, to be aware. To develop real knowledge is to see the reality, not make assumptions. Not believe or disbelieve, but see, to look, to be. No longer trying to change everything externally, instead only trying to change our perception because that simple singular action breaks the entire Wheel of Becoming.

You see, liberation is not acquired through making great external effort. It is actually acquired through being completely effortless, but by being awake. It requires no effort to be liberated. What it requires is knowledge, perception.

This is why it is stated:

“There is no ease within samsara’s realms;
ease is found in the awakened state.

“Through effort this awakened state is never gained;

it is not achieved with effort, but by letting be and never striving.” - Padmasambhava

“Letting be.”

Observe your mind. Observe your body. Notice that from day to day, from moment to moment, how much tension you have physically. Why? If you sincerely observe yourself and analyze yourself, you will find that your physical tension is only a reflection of your mental tension, emotional tension, and those come from a psychological conflict between “what is” and “what you want.” Let me give you a secret: they will never match. They will never ever match. This is an illusion, a carrot that is dangling in front of the donkey that it keeps walking after, but never catches. The donkey is too stupid to realize it and so are we. That carrot is what the [ego](#) puts there and what society puts there to keep us enslaved. It is that next thing that we want, a physical thing or a psychological thing: a title, an achievement, a status, some praise, some condition that we believe will give us happiness. They never do. Some say this is the state of being a human being; it is to never be satisfied. It is true. To be a being in our level is that: never satisfied.

I have observed very poor people and very wealthy people, and every range between. I have been all over the world. I have met enough people now to have a sense that there is no satisfaction to be found in physical things or in society, because I have seen the wealthiest who are much more dissatisfied than the poor. I have observed a man, very wealthy, with power in the world, sit at a table in an expensive restaurant and order six entrees because he was bored with the food. That cost of that meal could have fed an entire family in another place for many months. He spent hundreds and hundreds of dollars just to taste each one to see if any of them were interesting to him. They were not. He ate nothing. He tasted each one and walked away, wasted it, because his craving could never be satisfied. That man has found no ease in samsara. With all his power and wealth, he has found nothing.

Ease is found in the awakened state.

“Through effort this awakened state is never gained;

it is not achieved with effort, but by letting be and never striving.”

This has to be understood correctly. It does not mean that you should become like a log who sits and does nothing. What it means is that your attention should be still, observant, never grasping, craving, or avoiding. Never attempting to modify what is perceived, but only to perceive it with perfection, to see it with accuracy, to see it clearly. This can only be done if we are not in a state of craving or aversion, and if we are clearing ourselves of our fundamental ignorance, our perception.

In other words, we need right view, the way of seeing from inside that is very expansive, that is not trying to modify our perception, but just to see. It does not mean we should be inactive. Quite the contrary! Once you see what is really happening, you will need to be very active. If someone is being injured, help them. If you have a job to do, do your job. If you have responsibilities, care for them. Be

a good person. Emulate those who you would like to become, like the great masters. Serve humanity. Study the teachings. Be sincere. Be honest. Saturate yourself with the beauties of the teachings we have access to. Walk away from everything that is negative and is harmful.

All of that takes effort. To practice takes effort. To serve humanity takes enormous effort, but to awaken is effortless. To awaken is to let be and not strive. It is to be here and now, relaxed, observing always. Be here and now, relaxed.

The way to see if you are successful in this is if you have ever noticed or observed in yourself tension – physical tension, emotional tension, mental tension. That tension reveals a conflict between a desire and the truth, relative or Absolute. We have tension because we want things to be different. We either do not want something we have or we want something we do not have, and because that is the way it is, we are not happy, we are not satisfied. We have tension. We are ignorant. We are asleep.

The awakened state is gained through acceptance. That term, acceptance, implies an absence of pride, an absence of desire, to just accept.

There are many things that you cannot change. You cannot change other people, so why do you talk bad about them? Why do we always look for the faults in others? Why do we always complain about everything? The complaints do no good. They only spread negativity. Our gossip does no good. It only causes harm. Instead, we should accept, and where we see places to make a change, do it virtuously, with humility, with diligence, for the good of others, not ourselves.

Aversion

The next passage of this scripture states:

“By aversion, samsara is not left behind; It is freed within itself by letting be.”

Aversion is the psychological tendency to try to distance ourselves from things that we do not want. For example, in these types of teachings we explain about hell, but nobody likes to hear that. So, oftentimes, when the lectures are coming up about hell, people stop coming. Or a book comes out about hell and, “Yeah... I’ll read that one later. I really do not want to know about that. That will not apply to me because, of course, I’m going to heaven.”

Aversion is more subtle than that, though. When we have to deal with a person who contradicts our desire or our sense of self, we would prefer to avoid them. The truth is that situation is a great opportunity for us to overcome our pride, but it takes courage and a great deal of awareness to not avoid, but instead, to face the reality, take care of our responsibilities, accept it for what it is, and learn.

So, a great antidote that you can apply to everything is to learn to expand your view, being here and now, being perceptive of all things, and remember all beings have the same divinity inside that we do. No difference. That person that you want to avoid also has divinity inside. Why would you want to avoid that? Is it because they are giving you a little discomfort? Why do you have discomfort? Is it because of pride, resentment, anger, or envy? This is often the case. The person that we do not want to be around, actually we do not want to be around them because we are envious of them or resentful towards them. We do not want to deal with our feelings or our emotions, we prefer to avoid it.

“A general Gnostic rule in the Gnostic esoteric work is that when we do have a point of contention with another person, we can be certain that this is the very thing against which we must work on within ourselves. Whatever it is that we criticize so much in others is some- thing which lies on the dark side of ourselves, and which we neither know nor want to recognize.” - Samael Aun Weor, [The Great Rebellion](#)

Thus, we are caught in cyclic behavior. We are in samsara— and the way to free it? Accept it.

Acceptance does not come through craving, avoidance or ignorance. It comes through knowledge. Seeing it for what it is, accepting it for what it is. Comprehending it. With acceptance, we stop trying to change external phenomena, and instead work on remaining aware. This does not mean that you should accept it when a crime is being committed or someone is being harmed, or to just accept that you have no food on your table—no. You have to take care of your duties. What we mean by acceptance is something psychological: to stop the cycle of craving and aversion in your mind, which is rooted in fundamental ignorance of the truth.

“Your attempts to cure your miseries have brought no ease; you are at ease by loosely letting be.”

Our attempts to cure our miseries are also a process of craving and aversion. All the advertisements tell us that if we had a certain car, a certain wardrobe, we would be very happy. It is not true. I offer no apologies to all the car companies, because the advertisements are a lie.

Our attempts to cure our miseries come through everything that we do, not only all day, but all night in our dreams. The state of ignorance that we suffer within is so deep and so conditioned that we do not realize that we are constantly trying to overcome misery through external things.

This is the fundamental state of ignorance that will never resolve itself unless we comprehend it, unless we “loosely let be.”

For this, one must stop making effort on frivolous things, frivolous activities, and instead devote time and energy to actions that benefit ourselves and humanity. One person can make an incredible difference, simply by doing that.

“You find no happiness from craving; only when you have let go of craving.”

I recommend that you analyze that within your life. Now, the mind naturally says, “Well... I crave to eat that certain food that I really like and I am pretty satisfied when I eat it. So, I am not sure if that part of the scripture is right.” Well, relatively speaking, that could be true, but what about tomorrow? What about next week when that craving is coming up again and you repeat the cycle? Thus, that happiness you found was conditional, dependent. It was not independent, not permanent. It is very insubstantial and short lived.

Those who are addicted to profit feel very happy when they acquire a big profit, feel very proud, very satisfied... until the next day when somebody else gets even more. Envy emerges and their pride is hurt and now they have to go out and get even more profit. Or, profits begin to decline, and the person feels fear, anxiety, despair... Even when the profits rise, the person feels attachment, possessiveness, pride, resentment towards others, jealousy, and—of course—the desire for even more profit. The animal mind is never satisfied. Never contented. Never at ease. Never awake.

Beings who are subject to these conditions – ignorance, craving, and aversion – constantly repeat, not only from day to day but from lifetime to lifetime, from aeon to aeon... suffering, repeating, never free.

Tantra: Continuum

So, the Dalai Lama explained that:

“Samsara – our conditioned existence in the perpetual cycle of habitual tendencies – and nirvana, genuine freedom from such an existence, are nothing but different manifestations of a basic continuum. So this continuity of [Consciousness](#) is always present. This is the meaning of [Tantra](#).” - 14th Dalai Lama

Some of you might be surprised to hear that this is the meaning of [Tantra](#), because a lot of mischievous, and very foolish people, have confused humanity and presented [Tantra](#) as sexual indulgence, and the people who are doing that are [demons](#). They are completely divorced from reality. They have no concept of what [Tantra](#) is. They are black magicians, devils, who are intentionally or unintentionally misleading humanity and originating enormous suffering. They are committing a very, very serious crime against humanity.

The word [Tantra](#) literally means “flow, continuum, thread.” Something that moves.

Samsara and nirvana are conditions of movement. Bhavachakra illustrates that movement. A bhavachakra can be a condition of samsara or a condition of nirvana. The difference is, simply, our state of being. That is the only difference. That is why Padmasambhava taught that the only difference between samsara and nirvana is attention.

“Samsara and Nirvana have no difference than that between the moment of being unaware and aware, since we are not deluded by perception but by fixation. Liberation naturally occurs when we recognize that fixated thoughts are only mind grasping at its own empty manifestations.” - Padmasambhava, Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

The Dalai Lama stated that samsara and nirvana “*are nothing but different manifestations of basic continuum.*” That continuum is [Tantra](#) itself, the flow of energy in all things. [Tantra](#) is also the science to realize that, to comprehend that, to experience that. So you can take this word “[Tantra](#)” and put the word “[Gnosis](#).” It is the same thing: knowledge, experience, perception.

The one who follows the guidance of white [Tantra](#) utilizes sanctity, charity and [Chastity](#) to harness the flow ([Tantra](#)) of all things, and transmute all experience into a higher level of Being. This is very difficult, but is the path to complete liberation. Truly, this is a process of using willpower to invert the descending flow of energy in nature. That is symbolized in the lifestory of the Buddha when he places Sujata's ricebowl into the river and it flows upstream.

The rest of the world allows the flow ([Tantra](#)) of mechanical nature to take them down, deeper into the bondage of mechanical circling (samsara). Some accelerate that flow ([Tantra](#)) by harnessing the flow ([Tantra](#)) of desire, amplifying it, indulging in it, in order to move faster downwards. That is very easy,

and leads to having powers, but also more karma. We do not teach that method here. We follow the guidance of the Buddhas, who encourage us to swim against the flow.

The Dalai Lama continues:

“According to Buddhist practice, there are three stages or steps. The initial stage is to reduce attachment towards life. The second stage is the elimination of desire and attachment to this samsara. Then in the third stage, self-cherishing is eliminated.” - 14th Dalai Lama

These three stages are different faces of the same thing. The path that the Buddha taught, he explained quite simply... someone asked him, “What do you teach?” He said, “I teach about suffering and how to end it.” So these three stages are that: the comprehension of suffering and how to end it.

“*The initial stage is to reduce attachment towards life.*” Some people who do not have understanding of this type of philosophy become offended by this statement or think that it means that one should go live in a cave and ignore humanity and suffering and separate oneself from everything. That is not the meaning. It is actually quite the opposite. This attachment is that craving of the three poisons.

Attachment is grasping. It is a form of ignorance, and by “life” here is meant the deluded state of being: materialism, personality, [ego](#). To reduce attachment towards illusion.

It is only when you really start to comprehend through your own perception what your life is and is not that you can start to comprehend the way you have been living life, which is really a way of deep attachment to many impermanent factors. Then you start to realize, “Well, wait a minute... why would I attach myself to all these things that are impermanent and unreliable? When I die, I am not going to take any of it. None of these people who praise me will go with me when I am dead, and none of the ones that hate me will be there when I am dead... none of my possessions, none of my books, nothing.” Why be attached? Better to be at ease. Observant. Cognizant. Awake. Active in life.

Fulfilling our responsibilities. Serving others. Abiding by the ethics that are required in order to be freed from suffering, but inside, having the right view. Understanding interdependence. Understanding impermanence. To be attached is to be foolish, since it is reality that nothing lasts.

“*The initial stage is to reduce attachment towards life.*” This is difficult, and this only is the first stage. As an example, if you have children, how hard is it to be not attached to your children? If you are married, how hard is it to be detached from your spouse, but still loving and responsible? To not be attached, to not be grasping, to not be controlling, but instead to have acceptance. To be at ease. What about with your job? With your income? It is very difficult to not be attached to things that you feel emotionally or mentally invested into, precisely because you have so much attachment. That is why when those things are taken away from you, you suffer. When your child dies, when your spouse leaves, when you get fired, when the IRS or the government comes and takes all of your possessions, you go through terrible suffering. Why? Not because of the things or the people outside of you, but because of your attachment towards them. The suffering is from inside.

If you had [Gnosis](#), cognizance, that point of view of being at ease, acceptance, when the spouse dies you will feel pain, no doubt, but you will not be in an extreme state of misery because there would be no attachment. There would be understanding. You will comprehend it. You will not suffer in the same way, but experience a higher state of being than one who is attached.

This initial stage is very difficult, especially for us because we live in the world, in society, which at every instant is encouraging attachment, is pounding us with the influence to be attached – to attach yourself to certain politics, to certain fashion, to certain music, to certain types of language, certain activities. Society is driving this home all the time... to attach yourselves, to be conditioned by whatever it is they are selling you. It is an illusion that we willingly cloak ourselves in.

But someone who practices really seriously, continually from moment to moment, in [Meditation](#) to reduce attachment, outside and inside, can then move to the second stage, which is elimination of desire.

“*The second stage is the elimination of desire and attachment to this samsara.*” So this is deeper. Even if you eliminate the attachment to something, you will still have the roots of that attachment inside. By “desire”, here it is meant craving and aversion. Aversion is a desire. We want to avoid being embarrassed. That is a desire of the [ego](#), of pride.

“*In the third stage, self-cherishing is eliminated.*” This is, of course, the most difficult. Self-cherishing is not merely the thought: “I am a good person, I love myself...” I know society is very much encouraging this sort of “love yourself” psychology. This is also very harmful. It is a way of justifying our mistakes and covering over the poisons that are killing us. Poisons that are killing humanity are our very self-cherishing. And when we go into this pomp psychology of “love yourself”, “accept yourself”, “encourage yourself”, this is a very, very deceptive illusion that deepens ignorance. We need to contradict ignorance. We need to bring knowledge.

Self-cherishing is the very root problem here. Self-cherishing is ignorance. We need to love purity, divinity, not our degenerated mind. That must die so that our purity can be freed.

So in these three stages, we see the three poisons: ignorance, craving, and aversion.

To synthesize this, learn to be present. This sounds like a simple thing, and I know everyone has heard it probably for years, but the simple truth is, there is only one difference between all of us and the Buddha, a master, and that is a simple difference. We do not know who we are. A Buddha knows the nature of their mind. A Buddha sees the reality, we do not. We have all these fancy and sophisticated ideas that a Buddha has gone through all of these empowerments and initiations and has achieved all these steps along the path, and all that is true. But, the fundamental fact, the fundamental differentiation between ourselves and a Buddha is perception.

“If you are asked what is the difference between the mind of the truly perfected Buddha and the mind of sentient beings of the three realms, it is nothing other than the difference between realizing and not realizing the nature of mind.” - Padmasambhava, Advice on How to Practice the Profound

Instructions

A Buddha is awake, that is the meaning of the word. We are not, and to awaken requires that we are awake, nothing else. To be. To be here and now, to see the truth. That is, to be in nirvana (cessation), not hypnotized by the circling mind.

Nirvana is a state of [Consciousness](#). Nirvana is a state of liberation. It begins here and now, through being here and now, awake, and freeing ourselves from psychological cages.

Learn to self-analyze, to discriminate what you perceive. Learn to question. We talk in this tradition of about self-remembering and self-observation. We talk about an exercise called S.O.L., which I explained earlier in this lecture. Subject, object, and location. These are good exercises and important teachings. But they really boil down to a very simple thing: be here and now. Question what you are seeing. Do not assume, and reach out. Expand your awareness.

I am putting it this way because there are enormous forces pressing down on us. To truly awaken requires that that awakening be persistent, that it be sustained, and that you carve out a space in your psyche where that presence is cultivated and energized.

That is why we teach so many practices and techniques, and we teach about the transmutation of energy. We teach about how to work with matter and energy, as an individual, as a couple. We teach [Tantra](#), how to work with the continuum of forces that flow through us, to harness those forces, and to direct them for good, for our development, and for the benefit of others. This is not conceptual. Self-observation, self-remembering, to be here and now, is not conceptual. It is experiential, only you can do it. In other words, no one can awaken you, no master can awaken you. Everyone is praying to their masters, to the saints, to the prophets: “Please help me with this and that, please come, please do this and that.” They will help you, but they cannot awaken you. Only you can awaken yourself. Only you can become a Buddha through that cognizance of being here and now. This is how you cut through the cycle. Being here and now. Cognizant. Observing the habitual tendencies – physically, emotionally, intellectually. Cutting them, learning to see the interdependence of all the phenomenon that have confused you in the past. This is a simple, simple thing. Not easy to do though.

This effort is not really an effort, and that is the other place that people get confused. It requires energy. So in the beginning because we have no energy, we have wasted our energy, and we have thrown it away on frivolous things, we are now drained of vitality. So when we begin this, we are not really able to sustain it, so it feels tiring and we forget. In this sense, we can say that it takes effort. We have to remember, we have to save energy, we have to do practices to accumulate and transform energy – that takes effort. But to be awake does not. If you have a cat or a baby, or different kinds of animals and you have observed them, you can see that they are awake. They are not making effort. A Buddha is awake and makes no effort, they are just awake. To be awake is to see and to be aware of seeing. But do not let that become something mechanical where you develop certain habits that you call self-observation, and let me tell you, every single student falls into that. Watch for it. Watch for how when you try to take on these teachings and practice them, you are just starting to cultivate new habits, habits that you call self-observation or presence or watchfulness. Those are not real presence or watchfulness.

To be truly awake is to see as though you have never seen. It is to have no projection, no interpretation, no labeling.

“The master Padmasambhava, whose realization is equal to the truly and completely awakened Samantabhadra, who possessed in his mind all the teachings on the view and [Meditation](#) and never strayed from the true meaning, was asked by Lady Tsogyal of Kharchen, about all the key points for resolving the realization of descending with the view from above.

“The Lady of Kharchen asked the Lotus Master: From where do all that appears and exists, the phenomena of samsara and nirvana, first arise?”

“The master replied: All that appears and exists, the phenomena of samsara and nirvana, arise from the solidified habitual tendencies of labeling. There are three types of labeling: mental labels, cognitive labels, and verbalized labels. Mental labels make thoughts move; cognitive labels build up habitual tendencies; and verbalized labels manifest the manifold objects. It would therefore be better if you stop labeling.” - Descending with the View from Above

Padmasambhava explained that ignorance is characterized by the tendency to label. By that he explained that everything that we perceive, we conceptualize. We label it. We do not see it for what it is, we see our label. We see a person and we immediately take that perception and interpret it and put a bunch of labels on that perception, and we think we have seen the person, but in reality, we only saw the projection of our mind, not the person.

Anyone have this experience where you met a person, made all these assumptions about them, and a little bit later on you find out that you were completely wrong? I hope you have had that experience; it is an important one. We are all doing that all the time. We judge appearances and we assume the appearances are true, yet they are not. They are illusions.

Everything we perceive in this level of existence is illusion. We do not see the ultimate truth, we only see a relative truth. We see a truth of things that are interdependent, impermanent, and unreliable. We have to learn to see past that, to learn to see that what we see is not real, not true.

Some scriptures states, “We have to see life as though it were a dream.” Then when we start to see life as though it were a dream, we can then start to see the reality poking through the dream. But this does not happen because we have the concept in our minds, “Oh life is a dream, I heard a poem about that once...” That does not do it. We are talking about [Gnosis](#) here, perception, something that you actually see, that you actually experience. If you have not actually, physically, through your cognizance, through your perception, seen through the veil, then you are not seeing the truth. And that experience is possible for anyone to have. It is only a matter of awakening.

This is why I explained how there are two truths, and why those truths are important to understand.

The Absolute is inside of you, the reality is inside. Any person, at any level, at any place, at any time, who learns to be awake can see and experience the nature of the Absolute. Right here and now, in the physical body.

There are no limits to that perception but those that are self-imposed. The problem is we do not want to remove them. We ignore them. We do not even see them. We think that what we see is real, we think that how we see is real, we think that the perceiver as its perceived is real, and it is all lies. If this sounds abstract to you, meditate, because you will experience it.

Someone who seriously meditates, seriously works with the tension and expanding awareness, will have the experience of realizing they are not an individual. They will experience that they are everyone. They will experience the fundamental nature of mind, which is the Absolute itself, which is selfless. And that experience can be terrifying because we are so accustomed to being in the cage of the [ego](#) that the experience of not feeling that cage is much like the prisoner who has been in prisoner his whole life, but when the door is opened, he will not leave because he is scared of the sunlight.

Freedom actually terrifies us.

The relative truth, which is all we have experienced and all we know, is a state of conditioned suffering.

The Absolute truth is complete freedom, and to experience that and to know that is not a matter of time or effort or certain practices. It is only a matter of awakening and cutting through the veil.

So, in your practice, work with your attention all the time. Being here and now, relaxing, accepting, expanding awareness, and using your energy in a beneficial way. Study the teachings, and this combination of forces will lead you.

Question & Answers

Audience: What is the best way to serve humanity?

Instructor: It is to find how your Being must express itself. So you have to ask your Being. You have to ask inside of yourself. You have to find that within. No one can tell you – no instructor, no book, no teaching. That is something only you can resolve as you walk the steps of your own particular path.

In the beginning when you do not know what that is and you are seeking ways to serve, find ways in your life, it does not have to be dramatic, just adopt a new attitude. Turn your current situation into service for others. Take your current situation as an opportunity to help others. Use your job, family, social interactions, as service for others. So instead of living your life to feed your own sense of what you want, need, and expect, learn to live your life with a great deal of awareness of the suffering of

others, with great kindness. Perform every action with cognizance of the suffering of other people. Take yourself out of the equation, and you will perform service, and you may be surprised at the effects.

Audience: You said, well it was written, everything that exists outside of the Absolute will decay. How is there anything outside of the Absolute? Is it all manifestations, even the impurities of a certain level... [*unintelligible*]

Instructor: Yes. The scripture said that everything that is outside of the Absolute will decay, and this is explained and it is understandable when you understand the two truths. Everything is one with the Absolute. Form is emptiness and emptiness is form. But everything that has manifested is relative, meaning it is not impermanent, it is not eternal. It is all impermanent. So thus, the subject change and decay – even the Gods, even the heavens.

That has to be understood in context, because from the level where we are now, that is pretty subtle. The level we are at now, we can pretty much say definitively that absolutely everything that we experience will decay. So let us start there, and later on when we become gods then we can re-analyze that scripture and see if it actually holds up.

Audience: Is there a particular mantra, rune, or practice to gain strength in the [Consciousness](#)?

Instructor: Well, pretty much all of them, any mantra, any practice done cognizantly will help you to acquire strength. Why is this so? Because when you use a muscle, you strengthen it. To be aware, to be present, in and of itself, strengthens the ability to be present. In the same way, to be distracted, to fantasize and daydream, strengthens your ability to fantasize and daydream. It is very simple.

What you do feeds itself. If you are indulging in concerns about your image and how others perceive you, you strengthen that concern. If, on the other hand, you are attempting to see the reality of those circumstances and not be influenced by your concern about your image, but instead only concerned with being true to yourself in terms of your Being and doing what is best for everyone, then you strengthen naturally, your cognizance. Very simple, this is merely cause and effect. What you do has an effect. As you act, you strengthen the action.

This is why in the *Lamrim*, the teachings that Tsongkhapa gave, he explained very clearly that the effects of every action are stronger than the action itself. This implies that when you do something, there is a great release of energy, an expression of energy. That energy is directly related to the action itself. So, we can look at an example and say, if you look at a child who has never experienced anything in relation with sexuality, but then they see an image of something lustful, something pornographic, immediately, an entire new realm of life has opened up, for good or bad, and that perception strengthens the urge to perceive more of those types of images. So, if that child continues to look at those things, they will strengthen that tendency and it will become an addiction.

Similarly, when you work to awaken [Consciousness](#), when you really experience the feeling of expanding your awareness and you feel the ease of it, the blissfulness of really being awake, you thereby strengthen the [Consciousness](#), and you strengthen your cognizance of the teaching, and you will naturally feel inclined to experience that again. This gives us inspiration to keep going.

We work with many different techniques and practices – mantras, runic postures, [Meditation](#) techniques, prayers – and all of them are important, and all of them are useful and good, but they are useless if we do not do them attentively. If we do them distractedly, we are wasting our time. We may say “I meditate for an hour everyday”, but if in that hour you are just thinking and thinking and thinking the whole time, you are not meditating, you are thinking. To meditate is to be attentive and present, not distracted. Thoughts may come, they may not. The mere experience of genuine [Meditation](#) strengthens itself.

This is why I am explaining it this way. You can use all the mantras and prayers you want, they can support your attentiveness, but if you do not have attentiveness in the first place, they will not do anything. You must first be attentive here and now, then those techniques can help you. At the same time, it means that you can awaken without them. To be awake does not require a mantra, it does not require a technique or practice. It requires being awake. A mantra cannot awaken you if you are willingly asleep.

Audience: In an old lecture, you said that the solar bodies in the Tibetan tradition are considered illusory bodies so at a certain level they are also an illusion.

Instructor: That is right. The reason they are explained in that way is to make sure that the practitioners understand that the two truths apply even when we are having spiritual experiences, even when we are developing through stages of initiation. Having an [Astral body](#) is important and good, and we need it, just so with the [Mental body](#) and [Causal body](#) – we need them in order to channel the energies necessary to pulverize the roots of our psyche, but those bodies are not permanent, they are

not our self, they are interdependent. They are illusory in the same way that the physical body is illusory, but the timescale of those solar entities are different. Atman, [Chesed](#), our inner Buddha, is also interdependent. That is, he is dependent on something else, he is not independently existing, he exists because of his inner Buddha, and that inner Buddha only exists because of the Absolute. So everything outside of the Absolute is impermanent, interdependent, illusory, and that is why we call all of nature which is depicted in this wheel, we call of this Maya. That is name of the Divine Mother. That names means “not that”, meaning that all of that, the Divine Mother’s space from which everything emerges out of her womb, everything is not that, it comes from that but it is impermanent.

Audience: So like the [Hebrew](#) letter [Hei](#) (ה), we are that.

Instructor: That is the letter [Hei](#) (ה), everything comes out and everything goes back.

Audience: It is and it is not.

Instructor: That is right. The thing that is important to understand about that is how that applies to us here and now. It is a very important understanding to develop from the beginning. It is why it is emphasized so much in Buddhist philosophy, and it is why I am emphasizing it so much in the way we are teaching here. Many people in the Gnostic tradition fail to grasp this essential point. As soon as they have some experience of having the [Astral body](#) or having an experience with a certain master, they develop an enormous pride and attachment and they think that experience is real, yet it is not. There is a very beautiful story explained in one of the ancient scriptures of [Tantra](#) that relates how Padmasambhava developed and became awakened. In one stage he was studying with his master in India practicing the technique that I explained to you today. The technique is a technique of Mahamudra, also called Dzogchen. It is called the methodless method. You simply sit, you do nothing but observe the mind and observe everything and maintain that observance. It sounds easy, but it is the highest practice, the hardest technique of all of them. To do it properly requires training. So he was doing this exercise for a long time, and at certain point he had all these experiences – he was seeing the Gods, he was seeing the divinities, he was seeing himself as a rainbow body, all these different beautiful experiences. He went to his master and said, “I had all these experiences.” The master said, “You are wrong. Look how much pride that brought up. Look at how much craving that brought up. Go back and meditate.” You find the same story in the tradition of Milarepa working with his students, especially Gampopa, where the students have all these experiences and think “Master, was this a good experience or a bad experience?” and the master says, “It was neither good nor bad. Meditate more.” Experiences are just illusions, images. So what? We are still bound to suffering. Experiences do not change anything fundamentally. Yet, we easily become seduced by them.

So this is why we need to study these types of teachings: to grasp and understand that even though you may have cultivated and created the solar bodies, they are not yours, they are not your identity, they belong to [God](#). We are still insects, and even if your Being is a great master, you are still the one who betrayed him – a sinner, a fornicator, an adulterer. We are nothing. We should not fall victim to craving and aversion, to illusion. We have to cut through all appearances, to learn to simply be, and in that simple being, we can then accurately reflect the expression of [God](#) and the world. But as long as there is an atom of pride, we corrupt it. A mere atom corrupts, and we have many. So we have to be very, very strict in how we understand these teachings.

Audience: To me, it sounded like a preparation for dream [Yoga](#) ... [*unintelligible*]

Instructor: Well, in fact, the material that I was studying to prepare for this lecture is part of a cycle of Tantras that are taught in certain Tibetan Buddhist traditions, which are, in fact, preparations for dream [Yoga](#) and beyond. In this tradition we put a lot of emphasis on awakening [Consciousness](#) physically and in the dream state. The problem is that at different points along that process we can become attached, and that is why the emphasis is so important to cut through appearances and not be deceived by anything that we see.

The purpose of studying dream [Yoga](#) is not so that we can be awake in the dream world and feel great about ourselves and feel like we have power, but many people pursue it in that way. If you pursue it that way, you can accomplish it, you can be awake in the astral plane, you can have experiences in the astral world, awake. But if you attach yourself to that, you indulge yourself in that, you will become a black magician, a witch, a sorcerer, and there are many like that. We do not teach that.

The way we teach it is to use that experience to cut through appearances on a deeper level. Even when awakened in the astral plane, it is still a relative level of existence that is deeply illusory. The physical world is very illusory, even though we perceive it as concrete because of the conditioning of our psyche. If we start to awaken, we start to perceive that this physical world is not real, and that experience is made more vibrant when you awaken in the astral plane and you realize that the astral world (dream world, fifth dimension) is much more real than the physical world; I realize that sounds

strange, but truly, it is much more real; that is partly why we do not awaken when dreaming, because it seems to be so real. After an experience of seeing this, then you reflect, “I thought the physical world was real, but it is really not.” It is very illusory. It is very deceptive. So like that, as you go deeper into different levels of the psyche, not only can you have those experiences but the dangers of becoming attached and confused are there, and that is because of the nature of our psyche. It is challenging.

Audience: What is the role of the Archons in our moment to moment illusion?

Instructor: The Archons, as expressed in the Gnostic scriptures, represent forces of nature, specifically in relation with the cause and effect dynamics of matter and energy. Those forces are active in us because of our own behavior. So, if we want to conquer and overcome the Archons, we have to change our behavior. We have to modify the causes and effects.

Audience: What do you do when you become awake in a dream?

Instructor: Pray to your divinity in whatever form appeals to your heart. Call out with your heart and ask for help and guidance, and ask to be shown what you really need to understand, what you really need to know. That is the best possible use of that experience. Do not fall into the mistake of many students who awaken in that world and say, “Ah, now I can go find out what is really going on in my neighbor’s house!” or “I can go and investigate that student or instructor, or I can go find out... etc.” Do not waste your time. Awakened experiences are very precious. Treat them as such. They are gifts given to us by our divinity. We need to accept them that way and treat them that way. So when you have awakened experiences, whether in this world or in the internal worlds, treat it as though it was handed to you in the hands of your Divine Mother. How would you treat that? As something very precious. So accept it that way and use it that way. She will help you.

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Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course

Qualities of Samsara

Written by [Gnostic Instructor](#)

Category: [Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming](#)

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This is a transcription of a lecture originally given live and unscripted on Gnostic Radio. You can download the audio lecture here: [Bhavachakra 03 Qualities of Samsara - AUDIO](#). There is also a reference PDF: [Bhavachakra 03 Qualities of Samsara - PDF](#).

In recent lectures, we have been describing one of the most important symbols of Buddhism called the Bhavachakra, which means the “wheel of becoming,” yet it is commonly called “the wheel of Samsara,” which is a bit of a misnomer as we explained in the lecture Bhavachakra. Today, we want to go deeper into how we personally experience this wheel, specifically in relation to how this phenomenon of nature affects our moment to moment experience.

The Bhavachakra is not a teaching of mere theory. It is a teaching that points out to us exactly why we suffer, and that knowledge reveals to us how we can stop suffering; so, that underscores its importance.

In these times, we are experiencing the wheel of becoming moving in a very profound way. Suffering in this era is quite strong. We all have been witnesses in recent days of many tragic events, where the suffering of humanity seems to be intensifying, and it is important for us to understand why.

It is not helpful to curse [God](#) or to live in fear. It is better to understand the principles that are involved in nature and our lives: the cause and effect relationship of all things. Through that knowledge, we then know how to change.

So, this teaching is not something merely interesting to think about or something to discuss. It is something that can make a profound impact in your life, and the lives of those you come in contact with — if you put these principles into practice.

The Bhavachakra or wheel of becoming represents a fundamental axiom of nature, which commonly nowadays is just called “evolution,” but the popular usage of that term only describes one half of the equation, half of the cycle of existence. Everything in nature is subject to evolution and devolution. Life is a cycle, a circle, and that is what the wheel represents. This is why Samael Aun Weor stated “The laws of evolution and devolution of life constitute the mechanical axis of all of Nature.” - Samael Aun Weor

This Wheel represents this function. Everything that is born evolves, is sustained because of cause and effect, and then declines and dies. There is no exception in the manifested worlds. Nothing is excepted from this law, except that which is unmanifested, that which is the Absolute.

So everything in manifestation is subject to birth, being sustained, and dying. The universe itself is subject to this law, and every existing thing in the universe, all the way down to the very smallest most microscopic existing element into the very atoms and the quanta. This wheel demonstrates that, it represents that fact.

We ourselves are subject to the laws of evolution and devolution. We are not an exception to the law. Yet, we forget that fact.



As mentioned previously, the tenth arcanum of the [Tree of Life](#) shows a wheel with two beings managing the flux of energy, matter, and [Consciousness](#), how everything evolves and devolves in nature. The tenth arcanum is called Retribution. This term “retribution” is used here as the equivalent of the term in physics “invariance,” which means that all things must be balanced and restored. This is not a law of punishment, but is a law of balance. Evolution and devolution balance energy, matter, and [Consciousness](#). Nature always seeks to maintain equilibrium, and whatever imbalances nature receives “retribution” — the force of nature pushing back towards balance.

For nature, a state of balance is achieved when the wheel of becoming turns harmoniously. That is all nature needs. This does not have anything to do with spiritual benefit, it is simply what sustains life. When anything impedes the basic function of nature, it receives “retribution.”

Nature itself is a repeating pattern, a circular motion. In Sanskrit, we call this function “samsara.” As we explained in the previous lectures, this word Samsara means “circling, to repeat, to recur, to recur again and again.” It is how nature processes energy.

Even in the minutest physical details of nature, from the gross to the microscopic, we see seasons that repeat, day and night, growth and death. The repetition of how life creates, sustains, and destroys everything is managed by Bhavachakra: the wheel of becoming.

Spiritually speaking, this law is also in complete control. Our spiritual life and experience is determined by this wheel. All manifested things repeat and circle unless there is a strong influence on the function of the wheel. The wheel does not stop, it continues to turn. So spiritually speaking we are all in Samsara, cycling, physically, psychologically, spiritually, circling, repeating... To change our experience of that requires incredible energy and precise knowledge.

“Life is a wheel turning mechanically with ever recurring pleasant and unpleasant circumstances.

“We cannot halt the wheel; good and bad circumstances always proceed mechanically; we can only change our attitude towards life’s events.” - Samael Aun Weor, [The Great Rebellion](#)

Today we are going to examine some of the factors that affect that possibility: how to escape the repeating wheel.



The Wheel of Fortune, by Jean Deville

☐"Samsara, 'circling,' is to spin from one place to another. Nirvana is to have cut through this circling." - Padmasambhava, The Cycle of Vital Points

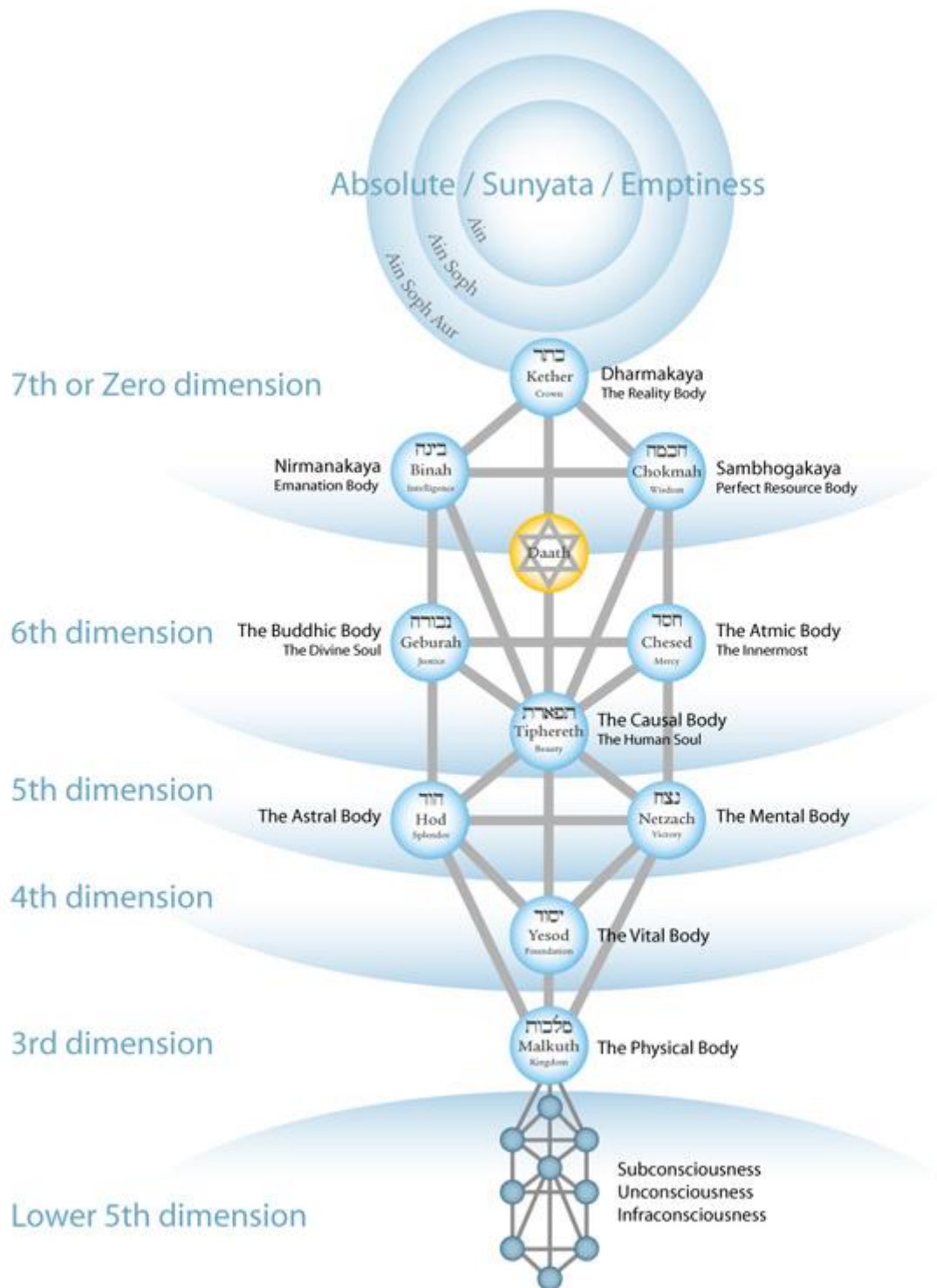
So let me reemphasize that the word Nirvana means "cessation, extinction, ending, to cut." We think of Nirvana as a place, yet it is only a place in the context of psychology: a state of being, a state of [Consciousness](#). A being only exists in Nirvana because their [Consciousness](#) is established in a state in which it cuts Samsara. It is free of Samsara in itself.

"Samsara and Nirvana have no difference than that between the moment of being unaware and aware, since we are not deluded by perception but by fixation." - Padmasambhava, Liberation Through Seeing With Naked Awareness

Samsara and Nirvana are experiences, differentiated by our attitude (bhava). Samsara and Nirvana should be understood in this way. Realistically, they have nothing to do with physicality, dimensions, heavens and hells. Samsara and Nirvana have to do with one's state of Being. We are in Samsara because our state of Being is one in which we repeat, we are asleep, identified, subject to craving, aversion, and ignorance. We do not see reality. Instead, we repeat our desires, fears; we repetitiously pursue our pride, lust, and envy, and we nourish our anger and fear. We do not cut through appearances, cut through our [ego](#), cut through our mechanical habits physically and psychologically in order to perceive reality. Instead, we perceive illusions that we propagate. We are in Samsara because we created that repeating pattern ("circling," Samsara) in ourselves psychologically, thus we live in Samsara, whether we are in a physical body or not.

Where we abide in the universe is determined by our state of being, not our physicality. We exist in one body or another because of our state of Being. It is not the other way around.

That is why is when we study the scriptures we find the [Tree of Life](#), which represents levels of matter, energy, and [Consciousness](#), but its primary function is to reveal to us the infinite potential of [Consciousness](#), the infinite potential for its expression (upwards, to superior states of being). But also represented on the [Tree of Life](#) is the potential for its conditioning —that is, its potential to be trapped.



The [Tree of Life](#) represents the world outside of us and the world inside of us. We tend to think of heaven and hell in the physical world only in terms of outside, concrete, materialist. We think of heaven as something above our heads that is very vaporous and vague and light, while hell is something under our feet that is full of fire or ice. Those places exist, but our relationship with them is not determined by our beliefs, the clothes we wear, our heritage, birth, or wealth — rather, it is determined by our state of being, our level of [Consciousness](#). In other words, whether we have a physical body or not, our state of being determines the level in which we experience life.

“Nobody can deny the fact that there are different social levels. There are churchgoing people, people in brothels, farmers, businessmen, etc.

“In a like manner, there are different Levels of Being. Whatever we are internally, munificent or mean, generous or miserly, violent or peaceful, chaste or lustful, attracts the various circumstances of life.

“The lustful person will always attract scenes, dramas and even lascivious tragedies in which he will become involved.

“A drunkard will always attract drunkards and will always be seen in bars or taverns; this is obvious...

“What will the usurer attract? The selfish one? How many problems? Jail? Misfortunes?

“Nonetheless, frustrated people, tired of suffering, want to change, to turn the page of their history...

“Wretched people! They want to change and they do not know how; they do not know the methods; they are stuck in a blind alley.

“What happened to them yesterday happens to them today, and will happen to them again tomorrow; they always repeat the same errors and not even cannon shots will make them learn the lessons of life.

“All things repeat themselves in their life; they say the same things, do the same things and complain about the same things.

“This boring repetition of dramas, comedies, and tragedies will continue as long as we carry in our interior all the undesirable elements of anger, covetousness, lust, envy, pride, laziness, gluttony, etc.

“What is our moral level? Or better said, what is our Level of Being?

“The repetition of all our miseries, scenes, misfortunes, and mishaps will last as long as the Level of our Being does not radically change.

“All things, all circumstances that occur outside ourselves, on the stage of this world, are exclusively the reflection of what we carry within.

“With good reason then, we can solemnly declare that the “exterior is the reflection of the interior.”

“When someone changes internally and if that change is radical, then circumstances, life and the external also change.” - Samael Aun Weor, [Treatise of Revolutionary Psychology](#)

If we are ruled in any given moment by a negative emotion (pride, anger, lust, envy), we are in hell in that moment.

When anger takes over your psychology, you become anger. Everything you perceive is filtered through anger. Everything you see you see only in relation to that anger. It says “everyone is to blame, no one understands me, I will have my revenge at any cost.” Anger abides in hell. Anger is a demonic quality. When you are conditioned by your anger, you are in Samsara in a very deep way, circling, conditioned in hell. This is true whether you have a physical body or not, whether you are in your physical body or out of it, dreaming or dead, really the physicality is irrelevant. What matters is your state of being.

The same is true of lust, envy, pride, fear.

Conversely, the virtues have a similar effect on us: they modify our experience, our level of Being.

When we really experience the beauty of cognizant, conscious generosity, when we truly give of ourselves to someone else, and expect nothing in return, as an expression of love, we experience that lightness of Being, the beauty of the heart that is inflamed with virtue. In that moment we experience Nirvana: cutting through Samsara, an experience of truth, something real, something that is not an illusion and something that benefits beings.

Similarly, when we experience the reality of [Chastity](#), happiness for others, diligence, humility, etc., we experience Nirvana, “cessation” of conditioning of [Consciousness](#). Those are heavenly states. You can experience them in your physical body or out of your physical body — the dimension you are in is not what matters. What matters is how we are managing our [Consciousness](#).

This is why the Seventh Dalai Lama stated:

“Samsara is one’s continuum of rebirth into the contaminated aggregates.”

Clearly, this applies to our rebirth into new physical bodies. Yet, it also applies to the continual becoming from moment to moment. Each moment is a birth, a becoming, yet we do not realize it, because we are hypnotized by appearances.

His statement is a beautiful phrase that contains a profound truth about Samsara and Nirvana, and about liberation. What is particularly interesting about it is it applies to everything. Everything that emerges out of the unmanifested (the Absolute) emerges into Samsara, into a continuum of rebirth, because of Karma, cause and effect, which is in its essence an expression of the contaminated aggregates. Then you might ask, what is that?

In Buddhism, aggregates are a specific term: skandas. We need to think about this not in context of universality or dimensionality, but in context of ourselves. Skanda means “a collection, a heap,” some different things that are gathered together. If you think of an aggregate of any other kind you can understand what this means. If you know anything about construction, you know that concrete is an aggregate. Different types of stones are aggregates. There are different mixes of different materials that are combined together in order to form something new, so when we create buildings or sidewalks or streets we are working with different aggregated materials to produce a hard surface. The skandhas are like that in us, psychologically. Our physical body is a skandha, an aggregate: it is a collection of many things, on many levels. As well, the [ego](#) is exactly like that: it is an aggregate of different densities of matter, energy, and [Consciousness](#).

So in Buddhism, the skandas are seen as having five fundamental aspects. These are completely interdependent and interrelated. We have given lectures about this before, and likely will again. Today I am just pointing at it to remind you, but we will not go deeply into this. The five Skandas are:

1. **rūpa**: form / matter
2. **vedanā**: sensation / feeling
3. **samjñā**: perception / conception / apperception / cognition / discrimination
4. **samskāra**: mental formations / impulses / volition / compositional factors
5. **vijñāna**: [Consciousness](#) / discernment

In synthesis, these are what we are. What you are, what you experience, what you think is your self is really just a collection of varying things: aggregates. These five collections give you the sense of being a person, a being, a self, with whatever name you give yourself, or whatever name your parents gave you. What you think you are is really just aggregated experiences, aggregated perceptions. The ultimate point of Buddhist philosophy and psychology is that perception is an illusion. What you perceive as self is not your self, it is not real, it is not permanent, it is not independently existing. It is temporary, transient illusion that seduces you into believing it is real. It is constituted primarily of desire, and it can never be satisfied. In short, that sense of self is all lies.

Observe yourself consistently, deeply, with an inquisitive, cognizant perception. You will discover that this physical body is not your self. It is not your perception, it is not [Consciousness](#), it is just physicality. It is just rupa: a form, and aggregate of physical elements. If you examine sensations (vedana) deeply, you will find the same thing: like physical matter, sensations come and go; they are really illusory. If you observe perceptions (samjna) you will find the same thing; the sense that you have of perceiving things physically or internally is also illusory. Go deeper into mental formations(samskara) — ideas, concepts and memories — you also find that these are illusions, they are like clouds in this sky, they do not last, they come and go, they actually contain nothing real. Deeper into the actual process of discernment of perception (vijñana) also, where is the self? In all of that, you find there is no true self, no real continuity, no permanence. This is why the seventh Dalai Lama pointed out that, “Samsara is one continuum of rebirth into the contaminated aggregates.” Samsara is the circling; the repetition of a perception of being that is essentially a lie, an illusion.

In Hinduism, they call this perception “Maya.” Unfortunately, because [Yoga](#), Hinduism, and Asian philosophy have been taught so badly in the West, people now think that Maya — which is also a name of the Divine Mother — is an intentional veil of illusion over us, as some kind of game played by divinity, or some kind of punishment, and that we are suffering in the illusion of existence as some sort of joke. This is not the right way to understand Maya. Our state of being was made by our own actions. We did it to ourselves. We are doing ourselves to our everyday. We produce Maya, we create Maya, we sustain the illusion, because we are constantly engaged in it, hypnotized by our own mind: thinking that what we think, believe, and perceive is real, when it is not.

Let me give you an example — a crude example, but it illustrates the point. When we watch television, a movie, or play a video game, or we are really into a story — whatever kind of story we are really hooked on — we get so into it, we really are in another dimension; we forget our body. We forget ourselves. Sometimes that is briefly, sometimes it is for hours. We are in that story, not in our body. We are not aware of ourselves. We become the character we are watching. We feel what they feel. That world that we are perceiving becomes our world. We stop perceiving where our physical body is. We only see that image of the world in our imagination, we are the actor, we are the character — we sweat, we get tense, we cry, we get angry, we react, emotionally, intellectually, even physically, to the imaginary perception of that story. In other words, we are deeply asleep, completely hypnotized, deep in Samsara: willingly, willfully, craving it. That hypnotized state is an escape for us. We do that because we want to escape suffering, we want to be distracted from our problems, from our life. We want to experience being the hero or heroine, being in that romance or being in that action, being the one who is accomplishing whatever is that is being accomplished in the story, whatever it is that we are experiencing in that way. We do not realize that our aggregates are producing the Maya, the illusion. Nor do we realize that by hypnotizing ourselves we are deepening our suffering, identification, hypnosis. We are deepening the illusion. That is a simple example that illustrates what we are really doing all day long, in many other ways. All day long we do this in more subtle ways, in ways that we do not even notice. We are asleep.

The example I am giving you can easily observe because it is strong and we all do it. However, more profound, more significant, is the way we are hypnotized all day long: day dreaming, worrying, imagining this, imagining that, remembering that, always distracted, always dreaming about the future

or remembering the past, or craving something we do not have, or wishing we did not have something we do. That is all Maya, it is all Samsara; it is all fantasy.

Tsongkhapa — who is a great teacher in Buddhism, maybe one of the greatest — stated:

"If one does not think hard about the drawbacks of suffering, one has not sufficient yearning for liberation. If one does not consider the source of all suffering —the gateway to samsara—one cannot properly know the eradication (nirvana) of samsara. Be moved to renounce this existence, weary of it, and cherish the knowledge of what binds ones to samsara." - Tsongkhapa

This is an expression of the introductory levels of every genuine religion. In the Sutrayana levels — the beginning levels — of every religion, this is the primary goal of the instructors: to help the student become fully conscious of Samsara, of suffering: how it exists, why it exists, and how to stop it.

If we do not think about that, if we do not have cognizance of that, we will waste our time with these types of teachings, and we will accomplish nothing; in fact, we will just make problems, and we find that in many spiritual groups, where the people are just there to have a place to go. People go to church, temple, or school merely because they need a place to go. They find some community there, comfort, social engagement, or even some kind of power, and that is really all they are there for, so they are not only wasting their time, they are generally making problems. Nowadays, most spiritual groups are just social clubs, in which the people pose as spiritual, even believe they are spiritual, but really are not.

To be a sincere student is to begin with this: to really analyze suffering — our own and others — and to really analyze the drawbacks of it, what it is, where it starts, and ultimately how to stop it. The only way we can really do that is by being sincere in observing ourselves.

So we are going to talk about six fundamental aspects of Samsara, how they work and their importance, so we can work on this aspect of our own spiritual development.

1. Continual uncertainty

In recent weeks, all of us have been observing the incredible uncertainty of life. There have been events unfolding that are teaching this in a very dramatic way, and these events will not be the last. Hurricanes, wars, political and economic changes, diseases, many types of problems that are emerging that point out for us the first of the six sufferings of Samsara, which is **continual uncertainty**.

We all suffer from one aspect of Maya or illusion, which is created by our [ego](#) and sustained by our [ego](#) and we very much want it to be true, so we believe in it and that is this: that one day, we will get to that place where everything will be just right. We will have the education, the money, the family, everything will be set up and it be just perfect, just the way that we imagined it should be. We will have the right amount of money in the bank, we will have a house, the kids and a job, and the whole situation will be “just right” (according to us). No matter how hard we work, how much we sacrifice, that “perfect situation” is always just out of reach. As close as we get, we never acquire it. Those who are a little bit older may realize that this manner of thinking is a complete illusion, since they have had a lifetime of being disappointed by pursuing that illusion. The sooner you realize it, the happier you will become.

“Fathers, son, wives, and enemies can change: friends may become the opposite and change again; samsara holds no shred of certainty.” - Nagarjuna



The older you become, the more you experience the truth of this. People you rely on and trust suddenly become your betrayers. People you thought were your enemies suddenly become your friends. Families turn against one another. Everything is constantly changing. We would like to be able control it so that life would suit ourselves. But the reality is that we cannot even control ourselves, thus we have no hope of controlling anything in our environment: not our children, spouses, parents, co-workers, boss, government, property, possessions, employment, health — nothing.

The reality is that everything is uncertain. Everything is unreliable. Everything is impermanent, except your Being, your Innermost, that divinity that resides within you that is urging you to awaken.

If we develop the cognizance of the uncertainty of all things, we reduce the power of Samsara over our [Consciousness](#).

Right now, we are very much hypnotized by illusion of “the certainty of things.” We think, “In six months I am going to do this, and in a year I am going to do this, and in three years I am going to do this.” We have “a plan.” Such plans are a big lie that we tell ourselves, in order to give ourselves a false sense of security. We want to feel secure, because we sense that nothing in life is certain. Let me tell you something: security does not come from telling ourselves lies. Security comes from knowing

the truth. Security does not come from an big bank account or social connections. The wealthy and well connected suffer and die as easily as the poor.

If you are really sincere and you really watch the process of your life, you recognize that everything you plan is wrong. Nothing ever goes the way you think it is going to go, and you are always surprised, and mostly disappointed. So, it is smarter, wiser, to not do that. Granted, in life we need a little bit of planning. When you are young, you need to prepare yourself to live life; you need an education, you need to be prepared, so you need to figure out school, a living situation, a job to cover your basic needs. All of that requires a little thought, there is no doubt. Parents need to have some strategy for raising their children successfully. People who have a job and some responsibility need to do some planning. But never, ever assume that things will go according to your plan, because they never will. Ultimately, the best plan is one that retains full knowledge of the uncertainty of life. So, being prepared for uncertainty, comprehending uncertainty, helps to eliminate the power of Samsara over the [Consciousness](#).

2. Elusiveness of satisfaction

The second fundamental aspect of Samsara is emphasized in this quote:

"...if a person were to receive all celestial pleasures, all human pleasures, it would not be enough. They would seek even more." - The Great Play Sutra



In Samsara, you will never ever find satisfaction. No matter how much you gain, your desires will never be satisfied. Even if you were become the emperor of the world, you would want to conquer the other planets.

So, we have to really comprehend this in the moment, every time we feel a craving — every time we feel that we do not have something that we want — which, just in case if you have not realized it, is pretty much one hundred percent of the time, because we are pretty much one hundred percent of the time identified with one desire or another.

I know that each one of us likes to think that we are “serious, spiritual people,” and that we do not have desires or cravings, but you are fooling yourself. Our state as a humanity is characterized one hundred percent by desire. It is not always desire for hot dogs, chocolates, hamburgers, money, or sex,

although those are some big ones. Sometimes our desire is for attention, respect, power, comfort, or love; sometimes we just want to be ignored, we want people to leave us alone, and they won't. Even "spiritual" cravings can become serious obstacles. These are all different types of subtle or gross desires that prevent us from feeling and experiencing the natural state of the [Consciousness](#), which is a spontaneous, natural state of satisfaction and contentment.

The [Consciousness](#) in itself, when it is unbound, is a state of contentment and peace. It is a state of serenity, of lacking nothing, wanting nothing, just being, and being happy. In our current state we do not experience that, in fact many of us have no idea what that means.

Nowadays, our interpretation of the word "satisfaction" is related with the fulfillment of a desire and the experience of a sensation. We think, "I had that big meal; now I feel satisfied." That is not satisfaction, that is drunkenness on a sensation. Some of us feel that after the sexual act; we feel "satisfied," yet that is not satisfaction, that is expiation, depletion, being drained of vitality, that is to be tired. That is not satisfaction or contentment.

The contentment, the serenity of the [Consciousness](#) does not crave, it simply is. The satisfaction of the [Consciousness](#) does not depend on external circumstances. It does not depend on having or not having, feeling or not feeling, receiving or not receiving. The satisfaction of the [Consciousness](#) is a beautiful experience, a beautiful quality that you can experience whether you are in the body or out of the body, but it can only be experienced when you are here and now, awake, and the [Consciousness](#) is not conditioned by anything, but is bright, perceptive, aware, and that in experience its true nature blossoms, which is happiness, joy, with no need to change anything, not oneself, not others, not ones environment, able to just accept, even when one is suffering. How else do we explain those experiences of those true Masters who, even when abused, looked into the faces of their abusers with gratitude, love, compassion, patience, acceptance. The black magicians claim that no true initiate will allow that to happen to them. But the black magicians have no comprehension of the [Consciousness](#). They only comprehend pride and self-love. The [Consciousness](#) has no pride, it has dignity; that is not pride. Dignity is the natural state of the [Consciousness](#), which is not above or below anyone. It just is. It loves. It is humble; it is satisfied.

3. Leaving bodies

"You could go again and again to upper realms and enjoy so much bliss. When you die, you fall to the suffering of the lower realms, where the suffering is unbearable and lasting." - Engaging in the Deeds of [bodhisattvas](#)

This is a law of Samsara, driven by its very nature, which is cause and effect, and impermanence. Samsara is a form of suffering that demands the circling of all things. No matter how beautiful your body is, no matter how much you work out, and how much organic food you eat, the body will get sick and die, and you will have to be born again. No matter your station in life, no matter how poor you are, or how rich you are, no matter how beautiful or ugly you are, how well loved or how greatly hated, you will lose this body and take another, and you will lose that one too, and take another, as long as you are chained to the wheel of Samsara: that chain is your [ego](#), your karma. No matter how great your station, whether physically or internally, so long as you owe a debt, you will pay it. You pay through losing your body, through being recycled by nature.



The wealthiest people on this planet, the most powerful, are still killed by microbes, viruses, cancers. They have no power over such little things, and will end the same as the poorest person, so why do we want to be like them? Why waste our life acquiring things that will not last?

Those who are spiritually minded believe that by becoming a Buddha, an Angel — by creating the [Astral body](#), [Mental body](#), and [Causal body](#) — we can escape samsara, and we can go and live in Nirvana, heaven, and be free of this world, and live there for a long time doing whatever we want, and have power and be beautiful, yet this manner of thinking is idiotic; that is also Maya, illusion. Instead of pursuing wealth and power on earth, they want wealth and power in heaven, so they can indulge in even more powerful desires, and be even more in love with themselves.

Even the Gods are subject to the cycle of samsara. Every manifested thing is subject to samsara. Yet, there is an exception to samsara, and we are going to get to that at the end of the lecture.

Every body that is created by nature, whether physical or more subtle, will be taken back by nature; this is invariance. There are no exceptions. The only way that you can transcend this law is to have a body that does not belong to nature, a body that was created outside of the wheel of samara based on other forces and laws, and thus is not subject to these laws. There is only one way to create such a body, and that is through death and resurrection. Very few accomplish it, because it is very difficult. Nonetheless, it can be done if you really want it; you can do it.

Even the gods are subject to samsara, even the Buddhas. Everything in every level of nature on the entire [Tree of Life](#) is managed by cause and effect. Those who live in the realms of the demigods or the gods were born into those realms because in their previous existences they had produced the causes that gave rise to that birth. They performed good deeds. They sacrificed for others. They gave of themselves, and their just reward was to be born in the higher realms. Unfortunately, things are so beautiful and pleasant in those places that once there they do not work on themselves anymore, nor are they able to perform more good deeds there, so they exhaust the benefits they had accumulated earlier. They use up the capital that gained them that birth. Since they do not produce any more good actions, when that time is expired, they fall, born into lower realms again, because they still owe karma, and they have not been able to pay it. So: if you have not paid one hundred percent of your karmic debts, even if you are born into a body of a [God](#) you will lose it.

On that note, let us point out that to leave a body is not pleasant. That is why in this part of the world all of us avoid the subject of death. No matter how dreadful the news, the media never shows us the dead bodies. People just cannot handle the reality of death; we want to continue in our illusions. We want to avoid seeing the reality of death, and this is really a disservice to us. It prevent us from comprehending the reality of death. Hiding the reality of death, emphasizes and encourages this illusion that we will not die, that somehow we will be an exception. Many of us have never seen a dead body, so our illusion is very strong, this illusion of “immortality” is very powerful. In other parts of the world, they see the dead, even on the streets. But here, as soon as someone dies, we cover them up, we hide them, no one is allowed to take pictures, no one is allowed to show pictures, especially in the news media. Death is hidden from us. Really, it is cruel to do that. We need to see death. We need to comprehend death; it is inevitable. It is unpleasant, it is painful. Because we do not comprehend that, we are deepening our suffering instead of improving on it. By avoiding seeing and understanding death, we are deepening our ignorance and therefore our suffering. If we comprehended death — our own, and every one else’s — we would not suffer so much when death arrives. We would be prepared. [Study our [course about death](#)].

4. Being born again and again

"You are gradually squeezed as hard as someone crushing sesame. Being born: is anything else like it?" - Nagarjuna



The fourth quality of Samsara is to be born again and again and again.

Culturally, we love to celebrate birth, and we think of birth as something very beautiful, and there is no doubt that birth provides a great opportunity for us to do the work. We need a physical body to succeed in this type of work. But, just like the process of death, we have cast an illusory veil over birth. We do not like to see how gruesome it is, so we hide the blood, the pain, the tearing of flesh, the sicknesses and pain that the pregnant woman goes through, and much suffering, and then there is the pain of the child. This photo shows you a screaming, pained face of a new born. It is a very, very painful process, for the mother, yes, but mostly for the baby.

We forgot — maybe willingly, maybe because it is something we do not want to remember — but it is very painful to be born. This is true not only just physically, but emotionally, spiritually, mentally. When the soul is first placed into that small weak body, the [Consciousness](#) has some degree of recollection of who it is, and its past, relevant to the level of conscious development. Coming back into this world is a horror, it is unthinkable, terrifying. It is not something that we welcome. It is not something that we want. It is awful. Then, to have the process of birth be what it is, and to come out and see how ugly all the people are, and how terrifying our parents look, and how everything smells terrible... Birth is a really a gruesome, gruesome process.

We forget that we repeat this process in each life. We repeat it again and again because of karma, because we owe debts here. We have to come here to pay what we owe to others, and to learn to become real human beings. Sadly, instead we live our lives trying to avoid paying — instead, we want to indulge in our desires even more, to become even more animalistic: attached to sensations and instincts. So, in each lifetime we do not pay; instead, we deepen our debts. We are born, and grow up with a sense of entitlement, like “the world owes me, and I want this and I want that, and I want all these things, and if I don’t get them, I am going to make all of you suffer, I am going to have a bad attitude, I am going to steal, I am going to lie, I am going to be grumpy because I did not get what I wanted.” Then we die disappointed with life, and are born again, and repeat the same mistakes, and make it worse, and we keep doing it. We need to wake up. We need to realize that that processes are very painful.

5. Moving high to low and back again

"All collections end up running out. The high end up falling. Meeting ends in separation. Living ends in death." - Transmission of the Vinaya

The fifth is to go from high to low and back again. This aspect of Samsara points out the impermanence of all things, and the cyclic or recurrent nature of all things. No matter how much you may acquire, you will lose it. No matter how high you may reach in society, whether it is political, spiritually or educational society, you will leave it; it is inevitable. Nothing can be sustained in Samsara; nothing.

The teacher Milarepa stated that every time he met a friend he remembered that they will become an enemy; every time he met someone with joy and gratitude, he remembered he will suffer the pain of separation. This is a way of training the [Consciousness](#) to not be identified, and to not make assumptions; to always remember the cycle of things in Samsara.

Even though we may be gathered as a group, and we may be able to make plans together, the truth is our time together will be short — months, maybe years — and then we will be dispersed to different

places, again cycling through different situations with different people, in different circumstances, constantly changing. Nothing is reliable, except the continuity of unpredictable change. We may build up a fortune, but we will lose it. We may get promoted, promoted, and promoted, but then we will lose the job, whether fired, or the company will sell, be closed; we will be out. We may acquire educational degrees and rise up in the educational system, and then find ourselves without any use for that education we worked so hard for. This is the nature of Samsara. We have to train the [Consciousness](#) to comprehend, to not fall victim to the illusion of the [ego](#) that thinks like Íkaros (Ἰκάρως, Icarus): “I will take these wings and fly to the sun,” forgetting that the sun will melt the wax of our illusions, and we will fall back to the earth, to drown in the sea of suffering.



This applies spiritually as well. Many people enter into spiritual groups, learn the doctrine, and think that with this group they are on their way to heaven. Then, unexpectedly, they find themselves in a great conflict. Gossip and doubt flourish like weeds. Fingers point every which way. The churches, temples and schools are broken and dissolved. There is great criticism and controversy. They find themselves a subject of ridicule. Every spiritual group exists in samsara, and is subject to the cycles of rising and falling. Sadly, people mistake attending a group with genuine spiritual work. Rather than joining groups, or seeking a supposed secure place in this unstable world, it is better to renounce wealth, to renounce fame, to not seek the respect of others, to not seek social elevation, to not seek to be satisfied in Samsara. Instead, seek to escape it.

This also applies to spiritual degrees that are required internally. Even if physically we live as a hermit, poor, unknown, anonymous, yet we awaken [Consciousness](#), we eliminate some [ego](#), we develop the soul — but we still have pride, lust, we will fall. Even those who are gods internally fall because of pride, envy, lust, anger. These laws apply not just to our physical life, but our internal life as well. This is one of the sufferings of Samsara: it applies to everything below the state after resurrection.

6. Being alone

"When you are born, you are born alone. When you die, you are just as alone." - Engaging in the Deeds of [bodhisattvas](#)



No matter what happens, we are always alone. We are born alone; we will die alone. There has never been any other way; there never will be any other way.

Many people seek to surround themselves with as many “friends” or “contacts” as possible, to cultivate a sense of security and importance, to feel needed, wanted, valued. Yet, this is an illusion. Some of us do that with physical things. We shop a lot, we buy a lot, we fill ourselves, our environment with a lot of things that we purchase — new clothes, new gadgets — all to give us a sense of security that we are not alone, that we have something, that we accomplished something. This is an illusion.

Some of us do that with spiritual teachings, too: we pack ourselves with theories, books, classes, and communities, all in an effort to avoid that sense of loneliness in our heart. We waste enormous time and energy with frivolous distractions, avoidances of reality. We should instead turn and face it, look it in the eye. We are born alone. We die alone. Accept it, and prepare for it, and do not be bothered by it. If you are bothered by it, meditate! Meditate on the reality that this is the truth for every living thing. What in you is disturbed?

When we are sick, we want everyone’s sympathy. “Oh! I feel so bad, come and pat me on the head, come and give me some soup.” We want attention. We want others to feel what we feel. We do not want to feel alone. This ignorance, pride, and fear. We need to realize that is just the way it is, and not let it disturb our serenity, not let it disturb our [Consciousness](#).

We should remember [God](#). When we really remember ourselves, we never feel alone. We feel alone because we forget [God](#), we forget our Being, we have lost touch with sensing Divinity. That is why we feel alone, and why we fill our lives with meaningless distractions, because we forgot how to feel the presence of the Divine. When you feel that presence, and awaken [Consciousness](#) to the degree that you never lose sight of that sense, you never feel alone. You never feel afraid. That presence vibrates from within your very core — which is the [Consciousness](#), not the aggregates — the [Consciousness](#) is an extension of [God](#), Divinity.

Awaken

So ultimately, all six of these qualities of samsara affect every being in every level of existence according to their level, from the [demons](#) all the way up to the highest gods. The antidote to all of them is the same: awaken and comprehend. Acquire prajna, the knowledge of the beyond.



“Many things can damage your life: it’s more impermanent than a bubble on a river, tossed by the wind.” - Nagarjuna

Cognizance of this statement leads one to become very sensitive to the present moment. This is precisely what we need.

The [ego](#) is only sensitive to the present moment in order to compare everything with its illusions. Each [ego](#) glances briefly at the present only so that it feels dissatisfied, and with that dissatisfaction it hypnotizes the [Consciousness](#) with the promise, “we can have much more.” So it sees that television commercial with all those beautiful people smiling and happy because they bought that new vacuum cleaner, then we feel, “I need that, too. If I don’t get that vacuum cleaner, I am not going to be happy,” so then we start planning, “How am I going to get the money to buy that vacuum cleaner, because it is really expensive, maybe I will get another job, maybe I will borrow some money from somebody, get in debt, or get a credit card...” We do this with material possessions, and even with a spouse: we dream of how to get the perfect spouse, and we modify ourselves to fit our illusory ideas.

This is how subtle, wrong transformations of impressions seduce us: by the illusions that our own mind is creating. This is happening all of the time, in everyone, and everyone willfully pursues these illusions, and the media willfully stimulates them to acquire our money.

If instead we learn to view all appearances for what they are — mere appearances — and we remember ourselves here, now, present, and remember Divinity, then we will clearly see that everything in life is impermanent, and the majority of what society is thinks is important is completely meaningless and utterly pointless to pursue. Then, instead of wasting time chasing fantasies, we can do something useful and constructive with our lives. We can change our experience of samsara, and learn to escape it.

Moreover, by seeing through appearances, we see that all of the aggregates that we experience here now are impermanent — our form, the sensations, the perceptions, the mental formations, and the discernment of them — all are impermanent, but there is something in the midst of them that does not die or change. It is our pure awareness, the [Consciousness](#) itself. If you can learn the taste of it, and learn to sustain its presence, you can change everything.

So let us go a little deeper into analyzing these forms of suffering. I know it is not pleasant to talk about suffering, but we need to. We all like to avoid this subject. We think it is suffering to talk about suffering, but let me tell you something: if you really want to go to the higher aspects of spirituality, if you really want to talk face to face with Divinity, this is how you will do it. You cannot leap ahead in

the spiritual process, you have to start here now, and change what is preventing you from that experience. What is preventing you from it is yourself, your own mind. The way you perceive is flawed. We all need to change that about ourselves. So, this theoretical presentation leads us to a practical experience that opens the doors to genuine truth, prajna.

The six qualities of samsara that we just discussed are related to the six realms. All six realms have all six forms of suffering.

“All sentient beings are deluded by ignorance and hence have caused three kinds of action. Since various actions arise, [the sentient beings] go through six forms of life.” - Nagarjuna, Middle Treatise 26



1. Gods (Sanskrit: Devas)
2. Demi-gods (Sanskrit: Asura)
3. Humans (Sanskrit: Manuṣya)
4. Animals (Sanskrit: Tiryagyoni)
5. Hungry ghosts (Sanskrit: Preta)
6. Hells (Sanskrit: Naraka)

First, we will look at the lower realms.

Sufferings of Lower Realms

- Animals (Sanskrit: Tiryagyoni)
- Hungry ghosts (Sanskrit: Preta)
- Hells (Sanskrit: Naraka)

Suffering of Animals

We will start with the animals. We will start there, because we are all like animals, some of us more than others.

When we talk about the animal level, most people assume that we are only talking about physical animals, yet we pointed out in the previous lecture that that is not what we are emphasizing. The teachings use the symbol of physical animals in order to help us understand ourselves, because psychologically speaking, we are animals.

No one anywhere can prove that the so-called "human being" has transcended the animal state. There is too much evidence that proves that we so-called "human beings" are just animals with humanoid-shaped bodies. The only real difference between us and what we call animals is that we have the intellect, reasoning. Yet, only rarely has the intellect helped us in a positive manner. Most of the time, we simply use it to justify and pursue our animal tendencies. We are very instinctive, violent, destructive, driven by cravings and impulses that we cannot control.

In many ways, we are worse than animals. Most animals do not destroy their own habitat, yet we do. Most animals do not destroy their own food and water supply, yet we do. Most animals just follow their instincts, which on occasion may tend towards an act of violence; yet they do not have wars that last for years, they do not destroy countries or cities, they do not obsessively pursue desires at any cost. Really, we are worse than animals.

When we analyze the existence of animals physically, we can find characteristics of how Karma processes in our own lives, and see how we are subject to those laws at that level of existence.

The most simple example is to look at how animals suffer in our world, under us: what we do to them. What is the experience of the animals in this world? (I am not talking about your cat or dog that you pamper, that you think it is your pet or servant, because it is really the other way around; you pick up the animals poop, you serve food to the animal, thus you are the servant of the animal. I am not talking about those animals, they are spoiled). I am talking about the other animals in the world that we do not treat well, and that we never have.



We treat animals as servants and slaves, without any real regard for their wellbeing. Traditionally and historically, they have carried heavy huge burdens for long periods of time with no relief. They are fed the poorest quality food; they have access to the poorest quality water. They are given the worst of everything from us, such as places to live (observe the animals this humanity uses for food: they live in cages for their entire lives). At any given moment they can be killed or eaten without any hesitation and without any concern for their feelings. They are beaten and abused. They are killed cruelly. Regarding wild animals, we treat them like any harvest: we take from them what we want, without regard for them or their future. That is why so many species have been wiped from the earth, often just because we enjoyed killing them.

Yet the worst situation is regarding those animals we raise for food. Even though the advertising and food labels want us to believe the animals live peacefully in green fields, that is a lie. Nowadays, we restrict all the animals to cages, we force feed them (using pumps and tubes), we inject them full of chemicals, we cut off their beaks and other body parts (to keep the "docile"), and we slaughter them by the billions to feed the millions of people that want the cheapest food possible from fast food places, restaurants, and grocery stores all over the world. Few of those people have any concern for the wellbeing of the animals they eat.



Caged chickens

Those creatures, living in those bodies, suffer unimaginably from birth to death. They do not have an instant of contentment, not a moment of peace. It is a life of continual abuse and suffering without respite. Truly, it is a level of hell. This is not just amongst cows, but amongst pigs and chickens and ducks and many types of animals. This is all over the world, but especially in the West. In fact, in order to prevent Westerners from knowing about this, it is forbidden to photograph the places where the animals live and slaughtered. No one is allowed to see the condition of the animals.

Recently, a non-profit group tested raw chicken in the United States, and found that around 90% of the chicken — even the so-called organic — was filled with pathogens and drug-resistant bacteria. That has been caused by the overuse of chemicals and poisons; what they were trying to kill is now impossible for them to kill.



Caged "humans"

So, this situation that is happening physically with animals on this planet reflects a psychological level of existence that many so-called "human beings" live in now. We talked about this in the first lecture. Many of our so-called "human being" neighbors are living at an animal level. All over the world, people are living by instinct. They do not have access to clean food and water. What they do get is filled with chemicals; even the water supply is filled with chemicals. Yet, they have easy access to drugs and alcohol, which keeps them docile. They live with the constant threat of death, either from war, corrupt leaders, religious or political skirmishes, or natural disasters. They live at the whim of those who have power, and they are killed just to serve the selfish interest of those in power: they are sent off to war. They are subjected to all kinds of chemicals that they do not know even know about, and have no choice but to struggle to survive from day to day. In the end they die without ever having had a moment's peace. Many so-called "humans" on this planet are living at an animal level, impoverished, caged in poverty, always under threat, without access to a moment of peace. By percentage, we could say the majority of the humanoid creatures of the planet live at this level now, really at an animal level; it is very sad, but it is true.

Those who do not live in that situation have no cognizance of it at all. Some organizations have estimated that 1% of the population of the world holds 46% of the wealth. Another way to look at this is that if your household earns \$50k per year or more, you are in the wealthiest 5% of humanity. The remaining 95% do not have access to what you have access to. Most of them cannot pick and choose what to eat, what to wear, where to go. They are caged.

Worse, we do not realize that tomorrow we could be living there. At any moment we could die, and in that moment we could be reborn into a body at the animal level, living in one of those places, suffering intensely, and we will regret the leisure that we just lost and the opportunity that we had to practice.

When you are at the animal level, living that life, you cannot practice [Gnosis](#). You cannot learn to meditate when you are in constant pain and suffering. Your [Consciousness](#) would have to be very powerful to overcome that, transform that, and awaken. Look at how weak we are now; we are so pampered. Anyone who has access to the internet, computers, cel phones, etc. is living in luxury, and even in the state we are now, with so much luxury, we are very weak. We get a little stomachache and we moan and cry, complain and cry, and go around complaining "my stomach aches." We do not know anything about the extent of suffering, not the first thing. We are so asleep.

Recently in the Eastern United States there was a big hurricane, and many people were suffering because of it; homes were lost, many were made homeless, and a few people died. It is sad, the suffering is sad, it is strong, but in comparison with what the rest of the world has faced, it is a mere fraction. In other places, people have suffered far, far more. Recent events in Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Burma, the Philippines, China, in which thousands died, and left many more without anything at all; they have no insurance. They have nothing at all. And these events happen after years and years of suffering poverty, no clean food, no clean water, persecution from their government, local wars, threat of being killed every day. When Westerners have a hurricane or tornado, houses get knocked down, but not many people get killed or left without anything at all. Do you see how different it is? So far, tragedies in the West have been much less than those in the rest of the world, especially since the rest of the world lives with less security and more threats every day. So, we have compassion for everyone, but we have to put it into perspective.

In synthesis, most "people" on this planet are living like animals: every day is a struggle to survive. They live by instinct, and have no real chance to escape their cage.

Suffering of Hungry Ghosts

The next level downwards is the level of the hungry ghost. In Buddhism, this type of suffering is characterized by intense, constant craving that can never be satisfied. Most people who study Buddhism or this type of teaching think that literally hungry ghosts are in some other dimension. In truth, that does exist, but the reason this teaching is given to us is to point out to us the psychological characteristics of that level of suffering. The real importance of the teaching is how it applies to us now. Just like the symbolic importance of the animal level, the hungry ghost level also applies to us here and now.

Hungry ghosts suffer more than animals, so imagine the animal state being even worse; that is the level of the hungry ghost. This type of creature has all of the suffering of the animal, but is even worse. Not only does the hungry ghost have no peace, no respite, and is constantly under threat, she is also consumed by such an overpowering thirst or hunger that she cannot think of anything else, not even for

an instant. Such a being cannot think of spiritual work, even an instant, because the cravings, the needs and desires that they have, are so overpowering.



Symbolically, their desires are represented by a hunger for food or a thirst for water. Most of the time, they cannot find what they need or desire. Worse, when they finally find some liquid or some food to consume, it hurts them. So they are terribly thirsty, and when they find water and drink it, the water burns like fire. So not only are they never satisfied, they are pained; it is a constant process of suffering. This scenario exists in the hell realms, but it also exists physically here and now amongst addicts. A vast majority of our population is addicted to something.

When we think of addiction, we always think only of alcohol or drugs. These are powerful addictions and deadly, yet are not the only addictions.

Hungry ghosts are people who suffer very powerful additions, and can think of nothing else. Their lives are ruled by their cravings for the elements that cause their pain. Acquiring what they crave gives them the illusion of satisfaction; that illusion of satisfaction is sustained briefly, but when it goes away, the suffering is even more intense than before they took the substance. Then, their pain is worse, so they need more and more.

This type of addiction does not exist only in relation with physical substances. The root of addiction is psychological. Addiction occurs because of our psychology, not physicality. Our physicality becomes altered with the need for the physical substance because the psychological need modifies our physicality. Scientists think it is the other way around, but they have got it backwards.

Addiction is psychological. Addiction is caused by the mind, which then alters the body. We see physical signs of addiction because the mind corrupted the body. Children are born addicted because their mind was addicted in their previous life.

“They say that woman is an enticement.

No, No, she is not so.

They say that money is an enticement.

No, No, it is not so.

They say that landed property is an enticement.

No, No, it is not so.

The real enticement is the insatiable appetite of the mind...!” - Hinduism: Allama Prabhu, Vacana 91

Addiction is not just for physical substances. The most powerful addiction in the world today is lust. Nothing else compares to the power of lust over the mind. Lust is the single most potent and

destructive addiction on the planet. It is the central reason why this planet is sinking into abyss very rapidly. All of the other addictions are clustered around lust; they are offshoots of lust. The core addiction is lust. Addiction to the [orgasm](#), to [Fornication](#), to [Adultery](#), to being lusted after, addiction to the chase, to being chased, addiction to pornography, to sexual abuse of all forms... In their core, all of these are an addiction that is rooted in the psyche. It is a psychological addiction, not physical. Proof of this is that even if your physical capacity to have sex is removed, limited, or reduced, the psychological addiction remains, it is still there. The proof is that the addict finds that it is the mind that desires. The body only responds to the mind's desires. The addict wants the psychological sensations more than the physical ones. The proof of this is in the experience of lust: if the psychological experience of lust is disturbed or interfered with, the physical experience is ruined. Addictions correspond to the level of hungry ghosts. Many people are addicted to profit. Many are addicted to stress. Many are addicted to shopping, or attention, or being abused. Addiction can be attached to anything at all, even to the very strange, such as eating hair or soap, or drinking gasoline. Addiction is a psychological imbalance, present in everyone who has the [ego](#) alive, which means all of us have addictions, unique to our desires and disposition.

The hungry ghost constantly pursues its cravings, and when it finds what it craves, it suffers more. Desire fed only grows stronger.

"Desire never rests by enjoyment of lusts, as fire surely increases the more butter is offered to it." - Laws of Manu 2:94

Unless addictions are transformed and destroyed, the addict will only sink deeper into suffering.

Suffering of Beings in Hell

In the hell realms we find all those beings who have processed through the other regions. Beings descend into hell simply by not changing. Simply being the victim of the desires, of continually believing in the illusion of the [ego](#), of continually trying to find satisfaction in egotistical ways, through sensations physically and psychologically, through this we build up such a huge mass of cause and effect in oneself that nature has no other choice but to follow its own law, which is to process you through hell. Hell is simply that: cause and effect.

"The demonic do things they should avoid and avoid the things they should do. They have no sense of uprightness, purity, or truth.

"There is no [God](#)," they say, "no truth, no spiritual law, no moral order. The basis of life is sex; what else can it be?" Holding such distorted views, possessing scant discrimination, they become enemies of the world, causing suffering and destruction.

"Hypocritical, proud, and arrogant, living in delusion and clinging to deluded ideas, insatiable in their desires, they pursue their unclean ends. Although burdened with fears that end only with death, they still maintain with complete assurance, "Gratification of lust is the highest that life can offer."

"Bound on all sides by scheming and anxiety, driven by anger and greed, they amass by any means they can a hoard of money for the satisfaction of their cravings.

"I got this today," they say; "tomorrow I shall get that. This wealth is mine, and that will be mine too. I have destroyed my enemies. I shall destroy others too! Am I not like [God](#)? I enjoy what I want. I am successful. I am powerful. I am happy. I am rich and well-born. Who is equal to me? I will perform sacrifices and give gifts, and rejoice in my own generosity." This is how they go on, deluded by ignorance. Bound by their greed and entangled in a web of delusion, whirled about by a fragmented mind, they fall into a dark hell." - Bhagavad Gita 16.7-16

What one suffers in hell is simply the effect of all one's previous actions. All of our anger, lust, envy, pride, jealousy, gluttony, etc. manifest back to us like a mirror. This is the law of invariance. When we throw a stone into a pond, we see the stone hits the water, and water goes down, and the stone descends, but then the water pops up higher than its original level. Compare these two points, there is an equal flow: the water that goes down and the water that goes up high. That is invariance. Nature always balances forces. The same thing happens when we engage in anger, envy, lust, pride, jealousy, and gluttony. When we propel that energy out, it propels back to us; but the returned energy is not equal, it is magnified. This is a basic law of Karma. We have talked about it many times. That is what hell is: it is the condensation of forces upon our [Consciousness](#).

When the cumulative forces of our actions reaches a critical mass, nature has to balance it by recycling us through hell. That is what hell is: it was made to balance our harmful actions. The Divine made hell in order to preserve order in the universe.

Inscribed above the Gate to Hell:

“Through me the way to the infernal city:
Through me the way to eternal sadness:
Through me the way to the lost people.

“Justice moved my supreme maker:

I was shaped by divine power,
By highest wisdom, and by primal love.

“Before me, nothing was created,

That is not eternal: and eternal I endure.

Forsake all hope, all you that enter hell.” - The Divine Comedy, Inferno Canto III

When we study religion, most people get really tired of the fiery preachers who yell, “You are all going to hell! You better repent and say that you believe,” and they go on and on about all different types of suffering in hell. We get really impatient with that. We do not like to hear it, so we change the channel, we go to some other church or temple where they do not talk that way, where they talk really nice and sweet. Actually, we need to hear about the hell realms. We need to comprehend and understand that hell is real. We are already experiencing many aspects of hell now physically, because of the cause and effect that we already put in motion. If we do not change that cycling, that circling that Samsara, we will deepen our experience of that. Suffering will deepen. That is how nature works. So we need to study hell. We need to study the sufferings that come from wrong action. We need to understand what the beings in hell experience. We need to be scared of hell. We need to be afraid of hell. If we are not, we are immense fools.

“He went from there to the east. There men were dismembering one another, cutting off each of their limbs, saying, "This to you, this to me!" He said: "O horrible! Men are here dismembering one another, cutting off each of their limbs!" They replied, "In this way they have treated us in the other world, and in the same way we now treat them in return." He asked, "Is there no expiation for this?"

"Yes, there is." "What is it?" "Your Father knows it." - Hinduism: Satapatha Brahmana 11.6.3

“As for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolators, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death.” -

Christianity: Revelation 21.8

“Then the man of unwholesome deeds boils in water infested with worms. He cannot stay still — the boiling pots, round and smooth like bowls, have no surfaces which he can get hold of. Then he is in the jungle of sword blades, limbs mangled and hacked, the tongue hauled by hooks, the body beaten and slashed. Then he is in Vetarani, a watery state difficult to get through, with its two streams that cut like razors. The poor beings fall into it, living out their unwholesome deeds of the past. Gnawed by hungry jackals, ravens and black dogs, and speckled vultures and crows, the sufferers groan. Such a state is experienced by the man of unwholesome deeds. It is a state of absolute suffering. So a sensible person in this world is as energetic and mindful as he can be.” - Buddhism: Sutta Nipata 672-76

Sufferings of Higher Realms

- Gods (Sanskrit: Devas)
- Demi-gods (Sanskrit: Asura)
- Humans (Sanskrit: Manuṣya)

We also need to understand the suffering of the higher realms.



Sufferings of Gods

Another great illusion that we have, which is propagated by many different types of religions and traditions — especially nowadays amongst “new age” theories — we all believe that if we somehow get to heaven, there will be no suffering there, and everything will be just perfect; we will be up there with our white robe, with all our friends and family members, eating ice cream, singing praises to [God](#). This is a lovely dream, but it is only a dream. That place does not exist. There are heavens, but they are not what we think there are, not by any stretch of the imagination.

As strange as it may sound to those who have been indoctrinated by Judeo-Christian theories for the past 2,000 years, there is suffering amongst the gods. Of course, Judeo-Christian traditions do not call them gods; Jews and Christians call them angels. Greeks call them Titans, gods, demi-gods. Asians call them gods, djinns, devas, [bodhisattvas](#), and buddhas, and by many different names. There are many types of beings that are awakened in the superior levels of life, but they are not perfect beings. They are more perfect than we are, but they are not Resurrected Masters. They are not free of the wheel of samsara. The gods — the angels — can fall from “heaven.” This is known in every religion. The gods are not immortal, omniscient, all powerful. They are not all knowing. They are more powerful than us, they know more than us, they live a lot longer than we do, but not even beings in those levels are permanent. They are also impermanent, and subject to cause and effect. That is, even if one becomes such a [God](#), that state does not last forever. It too is subject to the qualities of samsara, namely the uncertainty of change.

The gods suffer. They suffer in ways that are a little bit harder for us to understand. We all think if we pursue spirituality we will become a [God](#) (angel, buddha, master), and we will escape the suffering down here, and that could be true, in a relative sense. But actually, if you become one of these types of gods, in a sense your situation will become worse. How? Let us analyze by way of something we can relate to. What would happen to you if right now, all of sudden, you won the sweepstakes or the lottery, and won millions of dollars, and you no longer have to work, and can now have everything you ever desired? What would you do? Do you really think that you would keep pursuing [Gnosis](#)? Would you still have a reason to awaken [Consciousness](#)? Do you really think that you will renounce all that, and go and meditate, and work on your [ego](#)? I do not think so. I think everyone us would buy the most expensive car, a big fancy house, and give money to the people you like, and laugh at the ones we do not. We would feed up our fat [ego](#) with all of our desires. Why not? We would enjoy the wealth, and forget all about “suffering” and “[Gnosis](#).” This is how humanity is. We might give some donations (out of guilt, or for tax purposes), but no longer would we seek to destroy our pride, lust, envy, etc. Instead, we would become worse. We might think that we are stronger than that, but we are not; that is why we do not have it. So, if we were to become a [God](#) all of a sudden, that is exactly what would happen: we would become fat on the satisfaction of pleasurable things. We would not spend an atom of energy trying to liberate ourselves from samsara, not an atom. Why would we? Why would we renounce pleasure? That is what happens to the Gods. Flush with pleasure and bliss, they love to live in that level of samsara, and they live in that level as long as their dharma allows it, but when their dharma is exhausted — that energy that sustained them at that level — suddenly they have to descend

to the lower realms. It is very unpleasant to lose the blissfulness of those realms and fall into the lower worlds. They fall. They have to go back down. They suffer. They lose all of that pleasure and power. They come back down here, and have so much discouragement, pain, and resentment, and generally speaking, they become devils, because even they do not comprehend karma. They feel entitled to having “more.” They feel better than everyone else, and so they go around with a lot of arrogance. Sometimes they are in a spiritual groups, and they recover some of their powers, yet they retain their arrogance and sense of entitlement that they should be worshiped and others should follow them, and think, “I am such-and-such deity, I am Master such-and-such blah, blah, blah...” They suffer a deep sense of illusion because of all that. So the Gods have a level of suffering that is more subtle and more dangerous than most humanoids.

Sufferings of Demigods

Amongst the demigods, it is similar to the gods, but because they are less powerful, they envy the higher gods. Demigods are those who have acquired some degree of spiritual development, yet they envy the development of the higher gods, and want to be at those levels. So, they are always competing. This is why we hear of wars among the gods.

I pointed out earlier that these regions or realms do not apply simply to other worlds, they also apply here to our state of being, to our level of [Consciousness](#). Let me try to explain this in a simple sense. Each of us has [God](#) within. Our Monad, our Spirit, is our inner [God](#). Yet, among the Monads, there are many levels. Most are beginners, some are more developed, and fewer still are Cosmocreators: very high gods. This means that there are a few people who have a Monad who is very well developed. After death, those who have sufficient inner purity earn vacations in the higher realms. Those vacations correspond to the level of being. Someone whose Monad is a demigod receives a vacation in that level, yet it does not last very long. Similarly, someone whose Monad is a [God](#) enjoys a period of time in that level, yet, because of karma, it does not last very long. The karma brings the soul back down.

No matter the level of the Monad, if we have [ego](#), then we are degenerated, even if we occasionally have earned vacations in the higher worlds. The inner [God](#) always remains at its level, yet we are fallen. So, in all of us, there is a split internally. A being who is divided in this way is called a hasnamuss. All of us are hasnamussen. One stops being a hasnamuss when the [ego](#) is 100% removed. So: one thing is the level of the inner being, and another thing is the world in which the human part is currently manifested. All of us have the good fortune to be in physical bodies right now. Yet, that will not last very long.

Any one of us could be one of those whose Monad has some degree of development from past lives, or this life, and we envy those with more development, and try to compete with them. We want to have a bigger group, a bigger school, more fame, more recognition, more titles, so we are always talking bad about the other guy, “You know he did this, I heard this rumour, that teacher is really bad, he did this and this and this, he is a homosexual, he is an adulterer, he is a fornicator, he is stealing money from the congregation,” etc. All this type of rumors are related to suffering among the demigods: gossip, competition, envy, arrogance, jealousy. When we say “demigods” we are talking about the level of being, and in that sense, that level is worse than we are now; it is more dangerous. It is more dangerous in this sense: if you have no power, then your actions will have no impact. Right? It is logical. Yet, if you have more power, your actions will have more impact. So if you use that power wrongly, the impact you create is far worse. The gods and demigods have a lot of power — maybe not physically, but spiritually — when they misuse it, there are huge consequences. And, since they each still have [ego](#) remaining, they will misuse it. So, their situation is not better than ours. Therefore, it is absurd for us to envy the gods or demigods.

Sufferings of Humans

The sixth and final kingdom we are going to look at is the human kingdom.

We think that the human level includes you and me, yet we are mistaken. In this tradition we call each other “human” only out of politeness. Truthfully, we are not humans yet.

Strictly speaking, spiritually speaking, a human being is someone who has already created the soul.

“With patience will ye possess your souls.” - Jesus, Luke 21:19

A human being is someone who has some awakened [Consciousness](#), an [Astral body](#), a [Mental body](#), and a [Causal body](#); someone who knows from experience what Eden is, and experiences that — maybe not all the time, but they know how to experience it. So, we are not human beings yet. That state has to be earned.

Nevertheless, we are embryos of human beings. We have the shape, and we have the potential. So, we call ourselves “human beings” in honor of what we can become, with hope that we will achieve it. Who are human beings? Genuine masters of varying levels, like the Apostles of Jesus and Buddha, the yogis on various steps of the path, etc. Observe how the real human beings are tempted, scourged, martyred, fought over, criticized, worshipped, hated, venerated: they are in the middle.

The highest gods, the Resurrected Masters, first achieved the human state. Then, they went beyond. While achieving their human state, they suffered being in the middle. Study the lives of Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Moses, Milarepa, Joan of Arc, Padmasambhava. Each transcended being human; they went beyond.

Those who are human beings also have their types of suffering. One is they suffer being in the middle of the hells and heavens; they are pulled by both. Even we animals suffer that to some degree. We have all of our desires pulling us one way, and we have the longing towards [God](#) pulling us another way; so we are in the middle. The more you awaken, the stronger these two forces pull on you. The more you respond to the call of Divinity pulling you towards heaven, the more your [ego](#) fights against it. Do not think it will get easier. What gets easier is to understand, but the fight does not get easier; comprehension starts to come, and you need that, but the fight does not lesson; it gets stronger.

The humans also suffer from the flux of Samsara, from all those uncertainties, from impermanence, from aging, illness, weakness, having to eat and drink and work and deal with the family and deal with all the difficulties of being in life. The human beings are weak and have no power.

Worse, those who are more awakened are always trying to recruit the human beings into their battles. The gods and demigods call the humans to serve in their spiritual competitions. The animals call to join in instinctive living. The hungry ghosts call to addiction. The [demons](#) call to join in depravity and filth. Few human beings remain free of all the magnetic attractions that pull at them. Most succumb, and are lost.

“If we observe Nature, we see that not all seeds germinate. Millions of seeds are lost, and millions of creatures perish daily. A sad truth it is, but it is the truth.” - Samael Aun Weor, [The Perfect Matrimony](#)

There is a big advantage to the kingdom that we are all in now, to the level that we are all in right now. The advantages is exactly what you are doing right now. You can learn. You can study the doctrine. You can change. Beings who are already in hell are nearly impossible to change. Those who are already fully hungry ghosts are nearly impossible to change. Those who are already fully animals are nearly impossible to change. For those who are gods and demi gods, change remains very difficult, because the illusion of power and bliss is so strong. The humans beings, in the middle, can see both sides.

Although we suffer, we at least have this brief opportunity. Do not waste it. That is why we need to study suffering. We need to study heaven, we need to study hell. We need to study the doctrine. We need to understand that all things are impermanent, and that at any instant we can lose this chance. Everyone in the East Coast in the United States just passed a powerful experience [a hurricane], and a handful of people leaned a powerful lesson: that nothing can be relied on, except constant change. You can rely on the fact that things will always change; you cannot rely on anything else except [God](#).

“How could you not be afraid that you will be bound here, that there may be no end at all to the ocean of suffering in which you drown?” - Aryadeva

For me, this is an extraordinarily painful but insightful statement, and for myself, I feel incredible gratitude to Aryadeva for saying it, because it points out an essential truth about the illusion that the [ego](#) propagates: that somehow, someday, if we listen to the [ego](#), we will escape suffering. That is a lie. It is so easy to see that it is a lie, yet we do not see it. The reason we do not see that it is a lie is because we do not want to see it, but we must. If we do not look directly square in the eyes of the lie the [ego](#) is propagating in ourselves, then we will continue to drown in Samsara, in this life, and the next, and the next, and the next. Do not expect that you will change in the future, because you may not have one. We do not know when we will die, and where we will be born. This might be it.

Four Paths

We need to understand that there are four paths. These paths can be seen in life if we know how to look.

“There are four paths:

1. The Direct Path
2. The Nirvanic Spiral Path

3. The path of those who are separate from the Cosmic Scenario, without having reached the level of Adept

4. The path of those who fail.” - Samael Aun Weor

One of the misconceptions that people have about spirituality is that all spiritually is essentially the same and leads to the same place. This is an illusion propagated by the [ego](#); it is a bold lie. It is the same as saying all maps lead to the same place, when clearly they do not. A map is specific; it can only lead to the place it illustrates. Religions are exactly the same. If a religion is incomplete or flawed, it will lead you nowhere. If you have never been to the place you want to go, you will have no idea that the map is wrong. If you have never seen [God](#) face to face, how can you know that your chosen spirituality will lead you to that experience? Are you willing to risk your soul on a theory or interpretation invented by modern people? Wouldn't it be better to rely on a teaching that can be proven through your own experience?

Humanity is studying religions, analyzing religions, practicing religions, not having any idea of where they are going. People believe blindly. If you want to know where you are going, you have to awaken, then you will know.

These four paths encompass all spiritual paths, not only in this planet, but all planets. Every spiritual and religious tradition in existence correspondence to one of these paths.

We will study them from the bottom to the top.

The Path of Those Who Fail

The fourth is “the path of those who fail.” The vast majority of all beings are walking that path. They believe they are going somewhere, they might respect the gods, they might even follow a demon. They might be very well-intentioned. It does not matter what our intentions are, what our beliefs are, what the theories are. One is characterized as a failure as long as one remains bound to samsara, so that includes all of us. It sounds harsh, but it is a fact.

In our current state, we do not even know if [God](#) exists. Thus, we have no spiritual attainment. To be successful spiritually, to be walking the actual path, means to be awakening, to be experiencing reality. That is to be successful. It is not to memorize a doctrine or book, or to be able to teach it well, or to have a lot of followers. None of that means anything, because in samsara, everything is impermanent. As much as you memorize or acquire, you will lose it.

Most beings are on the path of those who fail, and that includes beings in all of the six realms.

Amongst all those realms are those who fail.

To fail means to remain with the [ego](#) alive. To fail means to not become unified with the Absolute. To fail means to lack having [God](#) within.

Many of those who fail are very powerful. We, foolish animals, are very impressed by wealth, power, spiritual gifts, yet these are mere appearances that confuse us. [demons](#) have powers. So what? We, mere animals, see someone displaying spiritual powers, and we become hypnotized, and assume that person is a [God](#), when in fact, anyone who is displaying powers is a failure, either a fallen being or an awakened demon. Either way, they are dangerous, and use their powers to hypnotize animals for the slaughter.

The Path of Those Who Separate Themselves

The third path is those we see who separate themselves from the cosmic scenario without having reached the level of adept. This is fairly rare. This is a type of being who learns just enough of spiritual practice to clean just enough of the [ego](#) that they get a vacation on the wheel of samsara. Their [Consciousness](#) reaches a relative degree of liberation, so they get a moment of respite, a vacation you could say, that is not permanent. They come back; they separate themselves briefly, but they come back. They did not reach the level of adept, meaning they did not create the soul. They are what we can call “an elemental Buddha.” Some people call them saints, pure souls, but really they are just animal souls who have reduced their animality, and have cleansed their [Consciousness](#) of some of the negativity, but they are not gods, they are not masters, they are just “clean animals” spiritually speaking; beautiful souls, really they are beautiful, but their level of attainment in wisdom is very small. Many of them are respected saints and spiritual teachers on the planet today. We think that they are “great beings,” but really they are not. They are just a little cleaner than us spiritually and psychologically speaking.

The Nirvanic Spiral Path

The second path listed here is the Nirvanic spiral path. This is even more rare. Someone who is walking that path has created the soul. They have created the solar [Astral body](#), the solar [Mental body](#), the solar [Causal body](#). This means that they have created superior types of vehicles. These bodies are

like the physical body, but they are not in the physical world; they are on the fifth and sixth dimensions. Such a person is able to access and utilize those bodies in the same way we use our physical bodies. They can go into the astral plane awake, and conduct their activities in the astral world. So they are buddhas, angels, masters, but beginners in those levels.

They are called “Nirvanic” because they have attained some degree of cessation of samsara in themselves psychologically; they have carved out a space in themselves of freedom of liberation from suffering. They have achieved some degree of Nirvana, cessation of Samsara. They are demigods. Sometimes they have physical bodies, sometime they do not. Some of them are anonymous in the world. Some of them run spiritual groups, and some are teachers, some are not. They are “angels” in the context of their level of their spiritual development.

They are starting up the path to liberation, but listen very clearly to this: they have just as much [ego](#) as us. Just because someone has created the soul does not mean that they have eliminated the [ego](#); not at all. To create the soul only requires the elimination of a fraction of [ego](#), just enough that enough energy can be harnessed and enough [Consciousness](#) can be liberated in order to allow those bodies to be formed, but you do not have to eliminate your [ego](#) in order to create the solar bodies, that is not the requirement. The work to eliminate the [ego](#) is separate (the Second Mountain). So the Nirvanic buddhas (also be called Pratiyeka Buddhas) do not have to eliminate their [ego](#), and often do not. That is why you can understand that the demigods are always fighting with each other, because they still have the [ego](#), especially pride, jealousy, envy, lust.

The demigods form religions and spiritual groups. They attract followers. They have powers. They display their powers in order to impress others, to so they say “inspire them.”

So we who are just animals see these other humanoid creatures who have powers, like they can manifest things from the other worlds, they can go out of the body, they can levitate, they can float, and they can read your mind, see the future or past, etc. and we, mere animals, become very impressed and think they are fully developed Masters, yet they are not.

Many of those amongst the path of those who fail awaken the [Consciousness](#); they do not develop the Soul but they develop powers. They also awaken [Consciousness](#) trapped in the [ego](#). They also form spiritual groups. They love to show their “virtues” and powers. They read people’s minds. They give predictions that come true. They give “prophecies.” They show all kinds of tricks, levitation, showing up in people’s dreams or in their houses, telling people things that are supposedly “secret” to convince others that they are great master and a great soul, when in fact they are a demon, a black magician, sorcerers and witches, people who are on the path of failure, the path of hell.

Now complicating this further, all of us who are at the animal level, who are suffering in the midst of Samsara with our [Consciousness](#) asleep, bewildered by all the forces that are in action around us, and confused and trying to find respite from our pain, seeking Divinity, see these beings that display powers, and think they are genuine and real, and we start to follow them and do what they say, not realizing that what they say is leading us into the path of demonhood or into the path of being a mere shravaka, a listener, a follower, someone who just worships someone else but does nothing to awaken. 99% of all human beings who call themselves “spiritual” are on one of those two paths: they are either following a demon or they are following a Nirvanic Buddha. Either way, they are gaining nothing. The only way to liberated from Samsara is to awaken your own [Consciousness](#). You do not have to follow anyone but your Inner Divinity. Do not be confused by anyone. Do not follow anyone. Follow your Innermost. Everyone is seeking a “Master,” not realizing that the Master they need is inside of their own heart. Your true Master is your Innermost.

Any of us are free to choose whatever path we want. [God](#) respects our will. Your Innermost wants its human soul to be reliant on itself, on Divinity, and to be strong: be a warrior, to not be weak, but to be capable of acting and doing what is right. That is why [God](#), our Innermost, gives us the ability to choose for ourselves, and to define ourselves in the world. If we choose the path of being a demon, our Innermost says, “Okay go ahead, suffer the consequences, and you will learn. It might take you thousands of years to pay your debts from walking on that foolish path, but go ahead.” [God](#) is not a tyrannical dictator. [God](#) is love.

Our Innermost, our Inner Buddha, wants us to Become completely, to Become: not to imitate, not to be a slave, but to Be as He is.

To Become [bhava] that requires that we comprehend the nature of suffering, and know how to transform it. In order to do that you need incredible insight, self-reliance, powerful willpower, but the main characteristic that you need is compassion. The most important characteristic is compassion.

The Direct Path

These three lower paths — those who fail, those who separate themselves, and Nirvanic Buddhas — lack compassion. All of them lack compassion. All of them are concerned with themselves. That is why they are still in the wheel of samsara, circling, repeating, rising and falling, gaining and losing, being born and dying, going up, going down, again and again and again, from body to body, from kingdom to kingdom, from level to level, again and again, and again and again, and again and again. There is only one way out, and that is through compassion developed to its fullest degree.

A few beings showed us how to do it. The most important one of the era is called Aberamentho, who humanity knows as Yeshua Khristus, Jesus Christ, but he is not the only one. Padmasambhava, Milarepa, Buddha Shakyamuni, Samael Aun Weor, Quetzacoatl, Moshe (Moses), Joan of Ark —many Masters have done this highest work. It is a path of fully developing compassion.

Real compassion has no self-interest. The three lower paths are full of self-interest. They each retain the illusion of “me,” the aggregates, conditioned by Karma; that is the nature of Samsara. As long as our central interest is ourselves, we will be reborn again and again into the conditioned aggregates, the illusion of self. Whether you are a demon or a [God](#), you remain subject to Karma and Samsara, repeating.

The only way out is through the direct path to the Absolute. The walker of the direct path renounces self-identification. The walker of the direct path renounces the [ego](#) in all of its aspects: comfort, satisfaction, pride, resentment, jealousy, envy, laziness, gluttony. The walker of the direct path perfects compassion, which recognizes the suffering of all beings in Samsara, and recognizes that those beings suffer there because they maintain an illusion of perception; they do not see reality. The [demons](#) do not see the truth, neither do the animals, the hungry ghosts, the demigods, the gods, or the human beings. None see reality. They only see through the filter of craving: craving this, craving that, never satisfied, being born again and again.

To enter the direct path, you have to first walk the Nirvanic path, in the sense that you have to create the soul. You have to awaken [Consciousness](#). You have to create the [Astral body](#). You have to create the [Mental body](#). You have to create the casual body. Having reached that level, you are given a choice by the cosmic Guardian who shows you two paths. “Do you want to take the easy way for a millennia, for a thousands of years, to take a spiral route through the cosmos, a gradual process? Or you want to go directly, now, no holding back, straight to the highest, but it is very painful because you have to pay all of the Karma from all of your lives, right now. You have to rectify all your deeds. You have to face retribution for every harmful action that you have ever performed. You have to answer for the illusion of your self-identification that you propagated for lifetimes, now. You have to pay your debts to every being that you ever harmed, that you ever lied to, stole from, hurt, to pay it now...” Very few make the choice to take the direct path, yet that is the only way off the wheel of Samsara. There is no other way. All the other paths and teachings that exist only help you migrate from one level to another in the wheel of Samsara; they do not take you out of it. Thus, they are all more or less useless.

You can become a great adherent of a religion, perfect all their teachings in yourself, become a [God](#), sustain that level for a little while, but once your dharma is exhausted (the sum of your previous good deeds), you will fall again to the worlds below, because you will still have unpaid debts there.

You can become a very powerful demon, awaken a lot of powers, grow your tail very long, and have many medals on your chest for all the harm that you committed, and all of the actions that you have done in order to enforce desire and encourage lust, anger, envy, and pride in people, but in the end it will all be stripped from you, and you will suffer aeons of pain for those actions. It will all be taken from you, and you will start again from zero.

Or you can try to avoid them both, and stay in in the humanoid level, but little by little, your selfishness, laziness, arrogance, and envy will catch up with you, and you will sink down; it is inevitable. It is impossible to maintain oneself in the humanoid level, because the mind is an aggregate of actions committed in all the other levels.

So, people do not like to hear all this, because it sounds pretty discouraging. We need to hear it. We need to understand that there is a way out, but to get out, you cannot waste an instant, not one moment.



"The keystone of the principle I practice is self-liberation from samsara. With this quintessence of all teachings, I clearly see Awareness, naked and unsubstantial. My confidence in the View is the transparency of flux; since I know the Illuminating Void, I fear not life or death." - Milarepa, The Goddess Tserinma's Attack

Very few people understand the teachings of Milarepa, a great Master of the Tibetan tradition. He is widely respected by the Tibetans because he was the first Tibetan to become publicly known as an awakened Buddha. He started out as black magician. He killed people for revenge; so, he started out like us, a common person who suffered misfortunes, who learned some spiritual practices, and in order to get revenge he killed a bunch of people. Then he realized, "What am I doing?" Then he sought to change, and he did, and he became a very highly awakened being, a great [bodhisattva](#).

The term [bodhisattva](#) refers to someone who is walking the straight path, the direct path, someone who is going beyond the wheel of becoming. Milarepa achieved that. He is a very high master. Because of that, his teachings are very hard to understand. All of the [bodhisattvas](#) give teachings that are very hard to understand. When we hear them, we dumb them down to our level, and thus we corrupt them. This is what we did with the teachings of Jesus. Jesus gave beautiful, profound teachings to humanity, and we destroyed them, we castrated them. We did it. We did that with the teachings of Krishna, and the teachings of Mohammed, and the teachings of Moshe, and all the Buddhists, because we do not

understand them. Now it is happening with the teachings of Samael Aun Weor. People do not understand them, so they cut out all the parts they do not understand, and just keep the little bit they think they do understand. Because of that, they adulterate the teaching; they corrupt it. Not only do they divert themselves away from the path, but they divert everyone that they spread that infectious lie to. Obviously, this is a crime.

This passage from Milarepa states “The keystone of the principle I practice is self-liberation from samsara. With this quintessence of all teachings, I clearly see Awareness, naked and unsubstantial.” It is hard to understand that. It may seem easy to you, but the other hand, it seems incomprehensible, and that is because it is. It is something that has to be experienced.

“Self-liberation” implies that no one can liberate us but ourselves. In fact, it is stated quite clearly in all the great religions that we have to liberate ourselves through our own actions (cause and effect). We get help from divinity, spiritual friends, the doctrine, and the teachings; we get help from our community, but without us doing the work ourselves, nothing will happen.

“The keystone of the principle I practice is self-liberation.” This is a really important passage that is going to come up for you in the next lecture — not mine, but from the other instructor, so pay attention. We just found this connection after these two lectures were already made, so it was pretty surprising to us; we were both shocked. You will hear it in the next lecture ([The Prayer of the Lord](#)), so remember that term “keystone.”

“With this quintessence of all teachings, I clearly see Awareness.” In previous lectures I told you about quintessence; it means “the fifth essence” or “the fifth element.” That is a statement about [Kundalini](#), about Prajna. Awareness is the purity of [Consciousness](#) that is unfiltered, unconditioned, and it is that aspect that we use that helps perceive reality. We have to learn about that, yet no one can teach that to you; you have to teach yourself. Through experience you learn how to perceive without filters, how to see, to be here and now, awake. We teach many techniques to fuel that experience, to guide you towards it, to help you comprehend it, but unless you make the effort, you will never comprehend it. It is something that has to be felt, seen, tasted, touched through your perception — naked and unsubstantial is the nature of your Innermost [Consciousness](#); it is uncontrived, unconditioned, but all pervasive. It is perception in its purest form, [Consciousness](#) in its purest form.

“My confidence in the view.” View is the first step of the eightfold path taught by Buddha Shakyamuni. Some people think “view” is a theory, “we see it like this” and that it is our “view.” That is wrong; that is not view, that is theory. Upright view, or right view as it is sometimes called, is not a theory, it is not a way of positioning your mind, it is not a belief, it is not something that can be written down or exposed in a teaching. Upright view is a way of perceiving right now. It is a way of seeing, it is a way of experiencing. Not merely seeing physically, but seeing with the [Consciousness](#).

“The view is an unbiased and vast pervasiveness, free from center and edge, so let your mind-essence be uncontrived.” - Padmasambhava, *The Cycle of Vital Points*

Right view in its developed form, in the perspective of a [bodhisattva](#) like Milarepa, is to see the insubstantial nature of all things. That is what he means by “the transparency of flux.” Flux means change, the coming and going of everything, Samsara. Right view is to see the transparency, the illusion of all manifested activity. Right view is to see that everything that you see is an illusion, impermanent, unreliable, and inside of all of that, sustaining all of that, is the Absolute, the Void. Within that perception is great compassion for all those beings in the six realms who do not see reality, and therefore suffer. We think what we see is real, and think what we see will last, and think what we see can be relied upon, and think we can gain satisfaction from it. We are wrong on all counts. An awakened [bodhisattva](#) sees that is a lie, and has confidence in that perception, and wants to help us acquire the same perception.

Milarepa says, “Since I know the illuminating void, I fear not life or death.” The illuminating void is the Absolute, it is the Ain Soph, Shunyata, the emptiness, the abstract space within which everything exists. In that abstract space, there is no self, there is no I, but there is great love, compassion, intelligence, wisdom, knowledge. A [bodhisattva](#) who fully develops becomes an expression of that, knows the emptiness, perceives the emptiness, and in that perception has great compassion for all beings, and wants to show them that experience so that they can liberate themselves from the illusion that causes suffering; that is what this passage is explaining. In that knowledge — which is a form of perception not intellectualism — is confidence: no fear of life, no fear death, no fear of rebirth, no fear of dissatisfaction, no fear of cycling in Samsara, because one has escaped it; whether one is born or one dies there is no fear. So this statement represents the perspective of a Being who escaped Samsara. It is hard for us to grasp, because it is quite far away from where we are now. But it is what we need to understand, and that is why we teach the way we teach. We teach you about the Absolute, we teach

you about awakening, we teach you about the tools that can facilitate and empower that awakening, so that we can cut through appearances and see reality.

Questions and Answers

Audience: Our karma is so heavy — our egos — they return to the infradimensions? to animals or the realms of hell? That's part of your [Consciousness](#); how do you get it back... in terms of working on it again?

Instructor: When we study the [Tree of Life](#), we see many dimensions, levels of nature — matter, energy and [Consciousness](#) — from very low levels to very high levels. Right in the middle of that, we see [Malkuth](#), which is the sephirah that represents our physical presence. Our psychology is dispersed amongst many sephiroth; it is not integrated. We have the illusion of being integrated in our physical bodies because of how the brain functions and how the matter and energy has coalesced in this type of body, and the [Consciousness](#) being inside of it. This gives us this illusion that we “are” this body, and we are this person such-and-such, and we are what we see, but that is not true; that is an illusion. The reality is that our psyche — although we see reflections of it here physically — actually exists in these other levels of nature. If we gain the capacity to awaken [Consciousness](#) in those levels of nature, we can perceive those aspects of our psyche directly.

A scary example of this: when you fall asleep, have you ever noticed voices in your mind? When falling asleep, if you pay attention, you can hear different voices. They do not sound like you. They may sound like people from another part of the world, sometimes they have accents, sometimes you hear a man or woman... and it is weird, those voices are not anywhere else, they are not coming from the next room or the TV or anyplace else, they are coming from inside of you. Those are your own egos. Those are psychological elements that you made at some point in your experience. What you are experiencing when you fall asleep is the reflection of the psychological content of those entities. Those entities exist in the fifth dimension. Usually your dreams are your [Consciousness](#) involved with those entities. So if you are dreaming that you are on a bus and you are with different people, and there is a fight, all of the entities in that scene are your own egos. This is how you can gain perception of them. To change them you have to analyze not only what you experience physically, but in dreams and in meditations, to start understanding the psychological content and how it relates to what you are doing and have done.

Now what is important about that: the same is true for all the different aspects of our psychology. Spiritually, we have aspects that are not egotistical. We all have virtues — maybe not a lot but we do have some virtues — and we can experience those also. Sometimes we experience them as though they are another person, and they are also in the internal worlds, with matter and energy. So the point I am trying to draw out is: pay attention, not only physically, but in dreams, meditations, and visions. All of what you perceive is an illusion, but it is an illusion that reflects something psychological that you need to understand. That begins physically.

Everything in your life now without any exception is a reflection of what you are psychologically — everything: the way you dress, talk, your interests, where you work, your family, friends, spouse, girlfriends, boyfriends, children — all are reflective of your level of Being, of your karma, of your psyche. Nothing is accidental. Nothing is coincidental. Everything has a correspondence to who you are and what you have done — without exception.

So, staring you in the face is the very map of your psyche. Every day, everything that you see, that you experience, is a reflection of who you are.

If you want change, and to escape your suffering, comprehend that reflection. Study it every day. For that, you have to meditate.

When something bothers you, it is because an element in you is impure. When something causes you to be craving or longing for something, it is because something in you is impure, and you need to analyze it. When you have dissatisfaction or satisfaction, you need to analyze it. All of your experience is all reflective of who you are.

Now the question specifically was how do we work on those submerged elements that we may not be able to perceive. I think from the example that I just gave you can see that there is an awful lot that you can perceive right now that you can work on. We all get bothered by stupid things all the time — at least I do; but maybe I am worse than everybody else. I get bothered by ridiculous things all the time, so I have plenty of material to work on. I do not need to go looking in the nine circles of hell for some [ego](#), because I have a long list of things that are bothering me here in this level. My [ego](#) likes to say “What is bothering me is this child, this spouse, this co-worker, this neighbor, this friend, etc,” and each [ego](#) wants blame them, but really, all they are doing is acting as mirrors for my pride, anger, envy, jealousy, laziness, gluttony... so if one of them does something that bothers me, instead of

blaming them or reacting, I should say, “Thank you very much, you just showed me something that I need to work on. It is causing pain for me and causing me to act in a wrong way towards everyone else.” There is my material for [Meditation](#). It is right here, right now, in physical life.

Sometimes you need to go deeper into those other realms, and that is why we need to awaken internally. To eliminate egos, to comprehend their roots, we need to meditate and go deep into our psyche in the internal worlds. Nevertheless, it seems to me that for many year at least most of us will find what we need to work on showing up in our physical life, and will find enormous volume content to work on. Later, when we find that nothing bothers us in the physical world, we can then dive deep in the internal worlds to find the hidden egos we cannot see from here.

Audience: Should we regard the existence as Bhavachakra as purposeful by the Divine or accidental, or is all this for some reason or is there some sort of trap...

Instructor: The reality is that everything that everything exists, exists because of karma. Karma put everything into motion. Causes from the past caused all this to be. Whether the intentions were one way or the other is irrelevant. You cannot trace back to find an ultimate beginning, nor can you go forward to find an ultimate end. Everything continues, and will always continue. The real question is: what is our relationship to that? Do we continue to be a victim of our own mistaken actions? Or will we transcend the identification with self and replace that with compassion for others in order to escape the wheel and move this cosmic scenario to a higher vibration? It can be done. It has been done. It will be done.

How many of us will do it? How long will it take? How much suffering will be experienced along the way? Our relationship with existence can be changed.

There are a lot of theories about why things started, and is this a cosmic joke, or is it a trap; those questions are irrelevant. Let us deal in facts: we are suffering. The ones we love are suffering. There is a way to change it. So, let us change it. Let us get off the wheel. Then we can understand those philosophical questions. But as long we are trapped in the cage, we can never understand the cage, no matter how beautifully it may be explained to us, as long as we are encaged, the explanation has no point or purpose. If you get shot, do you want someone to explain how or why guns were invented? No: you want the pain to stop, the bullet removed, and you want to be healed. So: we have to get out of the cage. We have to help our loved ones get out. After that we can debate.

[The Dayspring of Youth](#) is the title of the book by Master M. It refers to a cosmic current that is in motion now in this cosmic scenario. It is the motion of the cosmic Christ. It is a great energy flowing in all of nature. It is always flowing in nature, but it has a flux and reflux, just like any other force that moves in waves. Right now that force is very powerful. It is moving in a very strong way because of compassion for us. The suffering in our scenario is so intense. Not only that, because the Dayspring [Christ] emerges from the heart of the Absolute and has all knowledge, it perceives that our suffering here is going to intensify, so it is making enormous effort to inspire us to awaken from the illusion, and to incarnate its energy so that we can help others.

The Dayspring of Youth is simply the cosmic Christ. The [bodhisattva](#) is the only one who can incarnate that. All the other beings talk about it, even the [demons](#) talk about love, honor, dignity, and truth, they even can talk about Christ, and the ones who separate themselves talk about it, the Nirvani Buddhas talk about Christ, they talk about Divine Mother, but none of them have sufficient purity or sufficient vessels to incarnate the energy of the Dayspring of Youth.

That energy is the very root force of creation. In order for you to understand the nature of that force just on a physical level, contemplate for just one moment what happens when we spilt an atom: the amount of energy that is released from a single atom. It is an enormous quantity of energy that emerges out of that atom. That energy is a Christic force; it is not the root of it, but it is related to Christ. Yet, when released in that way, it is inverted, negative, destructive. Nevertheless, this example shows how much energy is in a simple atom. Well, your physicality, your vital body, your [Astral body](#), your [Mental body](#), your [Causal body](#), are all made of atoms also, and all of those atoms have energy inside of them, and convey energy, but they are all impure. So, if you can imagine what would happen if an atom were made pure, not like the impure atoms that we have on the physical world. If you split an impure, merely physical atom, much energy is released. Imagine if an atom were pure, made by Christ instead of made by mechanical nature — a perfect atom — how much energy would it have? An unthinkable, unimaginable amount.

The causal, mental, and astral solar bodies are made from Christic atoms. Those bodies can transmit orders of magnitude more energy than any mechanical body can, such as our psyche and our physicality. If the pure Christic energy tried to pass through us as we are now, we would be completely

obliterated, much like what would happen of an atomic bomb were to explode here; there would be no trace of us left. That is how strong the Dayspring of Youth is.

Now, at the beginning level of her path, the [bodhisattva](#) creates the Soul, the solar bodies, in order to receive that energy and give it to others, on whatever mission that [bodhisattva](#) is pursuing. But the [bodhisattva](#) who first enters that straight path is very different from the [bodhisattva](#) who completes it. The [bodhisattva](#) at the beginning of that path creates those bodies, but they are not perfect; that [bodhisattva](#) still has all of their egos and all of their karma. They work through the ten bhumis (levels) of Becoming, which we call the Second Mountain. In that process they eliminate the entire [ego](#), all of their mechanical residue, all of the karma. At the end of that process they die. Then they resurrect. In that process, they create a body of liberation. That is an entirely new body that is far beyond the solar bodies. It is made entirely of Christic atoms. It has an incredible amount of power to transmit energy. They become a Resurrected Master, immortal, far beyond the wheel of Becoming. They can transmit an unimaginable amount of energy. These are beings at the level of Krishna, Moses, Jesus — very high. They are capable of maintaining and guiding the life in entire systems of worlds. But even at that level, they have more to go; they have to then establish Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Dharmakaya. Those are the bodies of the Inner Buddha, which are even greater. All of that, level by level, is a process of managing the forces of the Dayspring of Youth to benefit others. It is a process in which that being becomes a more and more pure reflection of the Dayspring of the cosmic Christ: less I, less self, more about you, and more about you, and more about you, and more and more compassion, more and more light. The light that these beings transmit is painful to us, it is too bright.

Audience: For a beginner, since in [Meditation](#) it is very difficult to find anything to rely on, such as impressions or cravings or sensations, is it more reliable to look for relief from suffering through experiences in the internal worlds, or through experiences in [Meditation](#)?

Instructor: It seems to me from my experience that this is what naturally happens to most meditators. As we develop an understanding that we will not find satisfaction in the physical world and we want relief from that, we turn to [Meditation](#) naturally, and we turn to prayer; this is natural, normal. We need it; it is important. The problem is that most people simply transfer the egotistical reliance on physical sensations to an egotistical reliance on spiritual sensations. It will inevitably result in suffering. If you start to feel reliant on having astral experiences to have relief from suffering, you will be disappointed, I guarantee it. If you have an astral experience or two, you will feel so happy, but then you will not have experiences for a while and you will feel so disappointed. So, it is better to not rely on those experiences as your source of happiness. It is better to have the attitude: if they happen, they happen; if they do not, they do not. We have spiritual days and we have spiritual nights. Sometimes we have experiences, sometimes we do not have experiences. We have to be equally serene, in either case. If you want to know how to find genuine relief from suffering and sustain yourself in the path, find your relief here and now by being awake, by remembering [God](#), by being indifferent to success or failure, to pleasure or pain, to praise or to blame. Be indifferent. Remember your Being. Pray to your [God](#). Be here and now. In that, if you are sincerely remaining present and watchful, you will start to experience the true nature of the [Consciousness](#), which is as Milarepa stated, is naked and insubstantial, uncontrived but bright, pure, happy. You will not need to seek in caffeine, food, companionship, sexuality, alcohol, spiritual experiences, or in any other place for relief from suffering, you will only have to look into yourself here and now, and relax, simple as that.

The antidote to suffering is Nirvana, the cessation of cycling, cessation of craving. The very craving for relief is samsara. Let go of craving. Let go of seeking relief from suffering. just be here now and you will relieve it, simple as that.

One of the scriptures of Buddhism states, “As long as you have craving you will have karma.” Craving for anything, even craving relief from suffering, is a form of suffering. It is craving for something that you do not have.

Usually we want relief in the form of sensation, maybe a physical sensation, maybe emotional, maybe spiritual, but it is a kind of craving for something that you do not have, so you suffer.

There are many who read and study spirituality, and who really want to experience [God](#) and really want to experience going in the astral plane, so they suffer intensely, but it is suffering that they are creating for themselves, they did not have that suffering before they read the book or before they heard the lecture. Before you heard about astral experiences, you did not suffer from craving from it. Is it not true? You suffered from other things. Then you start hearing about waking up in the astral plane, then you start suffering, “I want that!” You are creating suffering for yourself by thinking about it, by dreaming about it, by imagining it — you are creating that suffering. So, do not think about it. Do not

crave. Be here and now. Analyze your experience. Relax. From that simple shift in attitude comes the cessation of that suffering. This applies to everything; learn to observe yourself.

Let us look at an example: let us say that there has been a big storm or battle in your region, yet you need fuel in your car. You discover that the line at the station is many blocks long because there is very little fuel, yet you really need fuel. How are you going to feel? Very irritated, very annoyed. Your mind is going to race, “I have to find a way out of this, maybe I have to get somebody to do it for me.” Your attitude creates suffering. You become tense, anxious, angry, upset. Your pride is inflamed, your anger is inflamed. You are envious of those who filled up their tanks before the storm came. Worse, from here, you will infect others with your negative emotions. You will yell, scowl, snap at people, make rude comments, etc. If instead you do not think about the problem, if instead you just do what you have to do, you can proceed without emotion. It is really simple: if you can act, then do so. If you cannot, then there is nothing you can do. If there is something you can do, there is no reason to be upset. If there is nothing you can do, there is no reason to be upset. We get upset because of the [ego](#). We have to change our attitude towards lives events.

This form of psychology points out to us — and I cannot emphasize this enough — most of our suffering is completely unnecessary. We needlessly create most of our suffering. We create suffering all the time because we have bad habits. If you can learn to shift your attitude, and be here now, be present, be patient, then a lot of that suffering will go away, and you can deal effectively with more fundamental problems, the ones that are really at the root of the problems in the world.

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Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course

Liberation from Suffering

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Category: [Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming](#)

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This is a transcription of a lecture originally given live and unscripted on Gnostic Radio. You can download the audio lecture here: [Bhavachakra 04 Liberation from Suffering - AUDIO](#) . There is also an accompanying PDF: [Bhavachakra 04 Liberation from Suffering - PDF](#) .

Today we will continue our description of the Bhavachakra, which is a very famous symbol in Asian mysticism, specifically in relation to the tradition of the Buddhists. In modern times, it is often called "The Wheel of Suffering" or "The Wheel of Samsara," but as we have explained in the previous lecture, that name is inaccurate. Its actual name is Bhavachakra, which in Sanskrit means "The Wheel of Becoming." Bhava means "becoming." Chakra means "wheel."



The Bhavachakra is symbolized as a great cosmic wheel in the grip of a terrifying being who looks somewhat demonic, but who actually represents forces in nature. This is not a demon, but actually a form or aspect of deity.

The Bhavachakra has been very misinterpreted and misunderstood, because people do not investigate the symbolic meanings of these traditions. In the [previous lectures](#) we discussed some of those symbols, so we can understand why it was taught and how it relates to us today. To remind you of some of those symbols, we need to understand that the Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, represents how nature functions. It can represent the kingdom of nature outside of us, symbolized as six realms that make up the bulk of the wheel. Those realms represent the realms of beings from the hell realms to the heavens and everything in between. All of that is depicted on the Bhavachakra, but that external, literal meaning is only relevant in relationship to our own level of being. In other words, to simply study the Bhavachakra as a map of the external world is a complete waste of time. That is not its purpose.

The teachings represented by the Bhavachakra were taught by the Buddha in order to give us a map of our own psyche, in order to represent for us why we suffer and how to change that. In other lectures we explain many of the fundamental structures of these teachings and how they apply to ourselves personally. Today, we are going to talk about liberation from suffering, and to understand that subject, we need to understand the lectures that we have already given in this course. We need to bear in mind that the Bhavachakra does not fundamentally and primarily relate to the external worlds, but fundamentally and primarily it applies to our own mind. Our own mind is the Wheel of Becoming; our mind is the Bhavachakra. We are in a state of suffering because of our mind.

In other words, when we look at the Bhavachakra, we should be looking at it as a mirror, not a lens towards the outside world. The chief value of the Bhavachakra is not as a tool to examine the state of other people's lives, but to examine our own.

The Three Forces

In esotericism, we study the laws that manage existence, and how existence emerges from the emptiness. At the base of all things, there is a fundamental natural phenomenon we call the law of three. It is symbolized in every religion as a trinity or triune cooperation of forces. Everything that happens occurs because three forces are in activity. This is a simple idea, but is very sophisticated when in motion. Some simple examples:

- birth: man + woman + sex = children.
- electricity: positive, negative, and ground

We talk about these three forces as:

- Affirmation
- Negation
- Conciliation

When we want something, that is Affirmation. The resistance to getting that thing is the Negation. When the Affirmation overcomes the Negation and we acquire the goal, that is Conciliation: the intended goal was reached. This is how all things happen, whether pleasant or unpleasant.

At the base of all things are found these three forces. Generally, students of esotericism study this in relation with positive things: creation, the spiritual path, psychology, etc. Yet, three forces are also behind destruction.



We explained in the previous lectures that the very core or center of this wheel, the axle that allows this great wheel to turn, is rooted in three symbolic animals: the pig, the snake, and the rooster. They represent ignorance, craving, and aversion. These are the universal three forces inverted. There are three forces behind everything, but unfortunately, in us the three forces have become inverted. Rather than creating love, creating harmony, creating love, when flowing through us our energies create destruction, suffering. The three forces in the universe that flow through us become refracted, twisted, and cause suffering. We are the generators of suffering. [God](#), the divine, does not create suffering. The gods create laws. Suffering is the result of breaking those laws.

If our interest is in fulfilling a desire, such as lust, that is Affirmation; we Affirm the desire by thinking about it, planning how to satisfy it, seeking a way. When seeking, there are obstacles. Naturally, when a desire is strong, we instinctually find ways around or over the obstacles. Then, we acquire the object of our lust and satisfy the desire, that is Conciliation: yet, the result of all of this is the strengthening of that desire (because desire fed is desire strengthened), and the inevitable consequences of all the actions we performed along the way.

Our minds create suffering because of how energy, light, refracts through our flawed lens, the lens of our mind. So that is what the core, the axle of the wheel, represents: the three forces at the base of all things, that in us have become refracted, twisted, inverted.

Surrounding that circle in the middle is another wheel that shows energy or forces ascending on one side and energy and forces descending on the other side; all of that represents cause and effect. It represents how those three forces create, and how results emerge from that creation.

We are constantly creating, in every moment. With every breath, we are producing something. With every perception we receive, with every impression that we are transforming in our minds, we are creating. With every reaction that occurs in our heart, in our body, in our mind, we are creating. Meaning: cause and effect is always happening, even when it appears that nothing is happening. At all times, cause and effect is happening. Again, this is inside of us: forces ascending and descending, a cycle. It is always happening in us, because of those forces in motion.

Our Mind is the Wheel

Around that second wheel, we find the six realms which symbolically represent:

- the gods
- the demigods
- the humans
- the hungry ghosts
- the animals
- those trapped in the hell realms; [demons](#).

Those realms reflect our psyche: levels of our mind.



All of us have levels of our own mind in the deepest regions of hell. All of us without exception have very demonic, very filthy elements in our psyche, because none of us are saints. None of us are angels. We all have the worst possible characteristics in our own mind. We may not be aware of it. They might not be active at this moment, but they are there.

We also have elements in our mind related with the hungry ghosts: very ravenous, psychological qualities that are never satisfied, lustful, angry, proud, envious, jealous, gluttonous, etc. These are very, very base level elements that simply want to consume, simply want to destroy, simply want to take. We have animalistic elements that operate on the levels of animals, with no awareness, no reasoning, they are very instinctive, competitive, defensive, aggressive, etc. They just want to eat, sleep, and have

sex. They just want to get along from day to day. They want to procreate. They want to nest. We also have elements that are somewhat human-like that can behave with altruism. That can behave “intelligently” to some degree. That can create good things, even just on a terrestrial level.

We then have elements related to the demigods, more pure elements such as love, the ability to sacrifice, the ability to help others. They are elements in ourselves that can give to others and create benefit. Here too, are forms of competitiveness and jealousy that are more subtle than the lower forms. We also have elements in our psyche related to the gods, very beautiful, very elevated portions of our [Consciousness](#) that are not trapped by all the other lower parts, but unfortunately for us we rarely contact these aspects of our psyche because most of it is so trapped and buried. Qualities related to the gods include generosity, kindness, the diligence to work for the benefit of others, dedication to divine things, etc. Nevertheless, any of these can still be egotistical, based in pride, vanity, etc.

So, these six realms are realms of potential experience through the course of our lives depending on our particular heritage, psychologically speaking. Our own psychological inheritance, in other words, according to what we did before, we are experiencing now, and that experience now is constantly fluctuating and changing in relation to these six realms in our own psyche.

If we are behaving poorly, decidedly and clearly selfish, envious, and angry, then the elements in our lives will reflect that, and we find that day to day, week to week, life becomes harder, more painful, more difficult, more confusing, darker. That is how these three aspects of the Bhavachakra are in motion within and around us. Because of ignorance, craving, and aversion we are putting in motion a cycle of cause and effect that is propelling us into a lower and lower levels from day to day. So, there is cycle being put in motion.

Similarly, if we are making the effort to only utilize our best qualities, to try to overcome our selfishness, anger, pride, jealousy, and to sincerely serve others, then we find that our life from day to day, from week to week, from moment to moment is propelled in another direction; we receive the benefits of our positive actions. Other, higher aspects of our psyche begin to become more common experience for us.

So, what we are pointing out are cycles and trajectories, how cause and effect propels us in our own wheel of becoming, and really, that is the synthesis of the lectures of this course that we have given before today. We need to keep that in mind, because we need to know where the trajectory of our life is headed, and we need to know how to guide it. Everything depends upon this; absolutely everything. If we do not have cognizance of how our moment to moment transformations of energy (in relation to the three forces) are putting in motion cause and effect and impacting our relation to the six realms in our psyche, then we do not know where we are going. Which means, we do not know where we are going. We do not have any idea. Which means, we are not in control. Which means, our life is a chaos. We are just victims of circumstances, which actually is the state of vast majority of beings on this planet, that includes the gods, the demigods, and the so-called humans.

As we have explained previously, all of the beings in all of the realms simply want to fulfill their own desires, to fulfill their own longings. Similarly, in relation with our own psyche, we have the same tendencies in our minds: the gods want to remain gods — by gods we mean (1) those who live that role in the world today, such as politicians, celebrities, etc and (2) our own egos who flourish when we have a “[God](#)” role in a given situation, such as at work, at home, etc. The demigods want to be gods (everyone envies those who “have more” or are “above”). The humans want to be demigods or gods. The animals just want to eat and to survive another day. The hungry ghosts want to feed their insatiable desires. The [demons](#) in hell want everyone else to suffer like them. All of us are in those levels here and now in this world, and also in our own psychological environment.

To escape this cycle is possible, but it requires an incredible revolution — not outside, not against our families, our co-workers, our governments, against our external religions. None of that means anything. Changing the exterior does not change what created it. The exterior circumstances exist because of causes inside of us. As many times as we change the exterior, nothing really changes, because the causes remain unchanged.

The revolution that has to occur is inside of us, against our own minds, our own way of doing things, our own way of thinking of seeing, feeling, acting. Our [Consciousness](#) has to revolt against ourselves. This is the revolution. It is inside. Is it invisible to everyone else. It is something only we ourselves can see, engage in, and act upon. No one can help us; it has to be done by oneself.

Liberation

That revolution is to take this wheel of becoming and turn it upon itself. It is a heroic act, and that is why in the great traditions the Mahayana and Tantrayana traditions those that accomplish it are called

heroes; in Sanskrit, वीर vira [the root, in fact, of the English word *virality*]. Another word for it is [bodhisattva](#). The word for [bodhisattva](#) in Tibetan is jangchub sempa, literally translated, means “hero of enlightenment,” and such a person is rare. Not everyone is heroic. So to accomplish that, there are two ways to escape the wheel.

Samael Aun Weor explained:

“There are two ways to achieve liberation, two ways to liberate ourselves from this valley of Samsara. The first is to become Self-realized, transformed into a Mahatma or Logos; the other, as simple elementals, without realization of the Inner Self.” - Samael Aun Weor

Let us clarify this statement so we can understand it without any vagueness.

To get off of the wheel is possible, but it is not possible so long as anything binds us to it. This is the first thing we have to clearly understand. We are enslaved by the wheel because we ourselves have produced that slavery. Our mind is the wheel. It is what binds our [Consciousness](#). The mind in its current state is our pride, envy, arrogance, gluttony, greed, etc. That is our own wheel of becoming. That is our “becoming,” and we are “becoming” right now. What we are now is what we have become. This is what we do not understand.

For centuries and centuries and centuries, we have been migrating from body to body — that has been a cycle of the wheel of becoming. This is what we have become: what we have right now. This is proof of how much we know about the wheel of becoming. This is proof of our ignorance.

What you are right now is a representation of thousands of years of living and dying. Was all of that worth it? To be what we are right now, to be trapped in suffering, in a body that is weak and impermanent? In a body that can be persecuted, easily sick, constantly afflicted with uncertainty, doubt, criticism, weakness, dissatisfaction, emptiness.

First, we need to be clear about our true state in order to change it. We are not anyone important. We are not anything important. We have acquire nothing lasting. We are like bubbles in a river. Yet, all of us sense it is possible for us to “become” something more, else we would not approach these studies. In addition, the great masters have affirmed we can become something more.

To accomplish something is what is outlined in this quote from Samael Aun Weor. There are two ways off the wheel. There are two ways to “become something,” but they are very different from each other. Everyone who comes into the spiritual path is convinced that they are the ones that will become a Mahatma or Logos. I am telling you a secret, because I know that everyone thinks that of themselves, but so does everybody else. Yet listen: the truth is that only one in a million will do it. It is rare to become such a high being. You will be very fortunate if you manage to simply get off the wheel at all, just as a simple elemental.

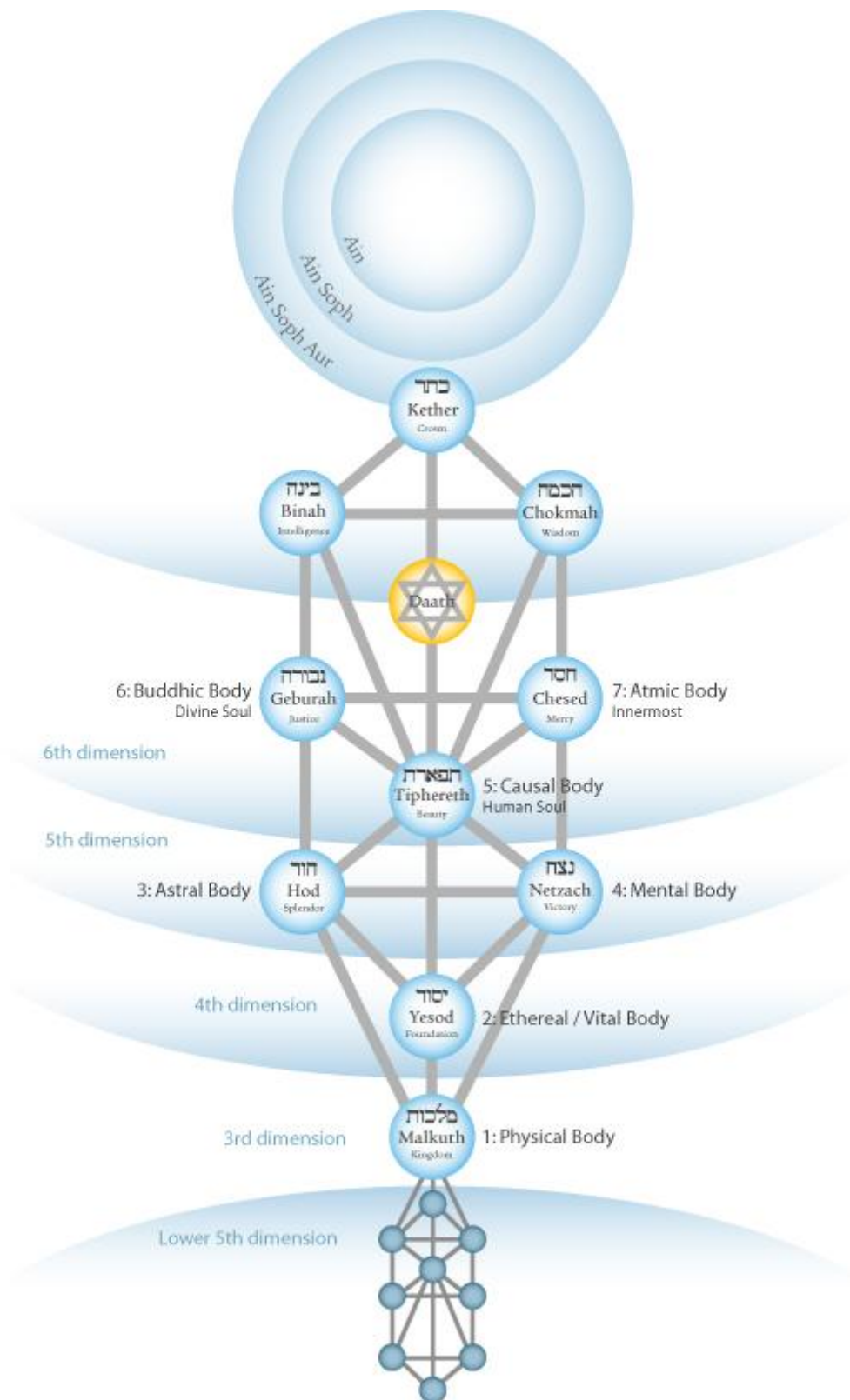
A simple elemental is any creature that has come out of nature and has eliminated all of its impurity, that has just freed itself from its pride, animalism, lust. It has just become clean, but just clean enough to get off the wheel. That is just a simple elemental. There are buddhas like that, many uncountable numbers, from an uncountable number of worlds. They are very pure, very beautiful angels, but they are not Mahatmas; they are not Logoi. That level is only achieved by [bodhisattvas](#). These are two very different, very distinct levels of attainment.

An elemental Buddha is a very beautiful being, and radiates incredible purity, more than any of us could probably imagine. But a Mahatma, a Logos, is a Sun. Compare the light of firefly or a candle to a Sun. That is the difference to these two. They are very distinct. Nevertheless, it is only possible to reach either state from the humanoid kingdom. We need our humanoid body in order to reach either of those levels.

In the [previous lecture](#) we explained four paths.

- The Direct Path: [bodhisattvas](#)
- The Spiral Path: Nirvanis, Pratyekas, Angels, etc
- The path of those who are separate from the Cosmic Scenario, without having reached the level of Adept: Elemental Buddhas
- The path of those who fail: [demons](#)

These four paths are related to the Wheel of Becoming.



The path of those that separate themselves is related to those elementals that simply reach enough purity, they purge enough karma and perform enough sacrifice for others that they achieve a vacation, a “break.” They can step out of the cycle and get a break, but it is not permanent . Many achieve that; many yogis, monks, nuns, priests, work hard during a lifetime, they perform a lot of good deeds, they work to change, and they become better people. After death, they get a break; they step out of the scenario for a while, and they get a break in a heavenly realm. But inevitably, they have to come back, because their psyche belongs to these realms. So, we can set that one aside for right now, because ultimately, it does not go anywhere.

The spiral path would be like those who step out for a while but they go a little further. They actually build some aspect of the soul; we call them solar bodies. These are psychological vehicles that have matter and energy but are not physical. The [Astral body](#), the [Mental body](#), and the [Causal body](#) are related to fifth and sixth dimensions. These vessels are created through the work that these beings perform. They are created through transmuting. They are “the second birth” taught by Jesus, and taught by Osiris. Through the process of that creation, they create the soul, a degree of immortality.

They become Buddhas, but not simple elemental Buddhas; they become Nirvanis, residents of higher degrees, more subtle realms of nature. They have more powers, more virtues. They are very beautiful beings, but they are still bound to the wheel by their minds. They become demigods and gods. Many of the so-called “gods” in mythologies are Buddhas of the spiral path. Many of the gods worshipped by humanity through all the ages of our history, and the saints and prophets, many of them are elemental Buddhas, Nirvanis, humans like us who walked the spiral path, who achieved a degree of development, and their Inner Beings became very resplendent and beautiful, and worshipped like gods. They are beautiful beings, but they are not perfect. That is why in all the mythologies we see battles between gods, battles of jealousy, envy, fights over territories, fights over who is the most beautiful. I know humans beings like to fight that way, but we are not that beautiful. The gods are beautiful, but not perfect.

Then we have the path of those who fail. That includes the vast majority of human beings. When we observe any tree in nature, any plant, it produces millions of seeds, but how many actually become a new plant? Very few. Most of the seeds are reabsorbed by nature. This planet is producing seeds. We are those seeds. Most of the seeds will die. It sounds harsh, but it is a fact. This is how nature works. Most of the seeds will not become anything. Some who have the will to do it can become something, but what they become depends on the intensity of their action. Most will fail. Most will be recycled. Finally, we have the first path mentioned here: the direct path. This path is walked by very few. In Asian mysticism, it is called the path of the [bodhisattva](#).

It is called the direct path because it goes straight through all things without wavering, straight to the point, without hesitating. You could say it is extreme. That is why it is called direct. It is direct. It does not waiver; it does not vacillate. It does not take its time. The other paths do. On any of the other paths, those that walk them take their time. They want to be comfortable. They want to do a little spiritual work, but also fulfill their desires along the way, and that is why they fail.

Those that take the direct path renounce everything. They renounce themselves. They renounce all pleasure. They renounce all comfort. They renounce acceptance, being loved, appreciated, admired. They renounce all terrestrial things, all material things. They might have them, they might not. They dedicate completely and one hundred percent to one thing, and that is to serve humanity. And so, such a being is very rare.

[bodhisattvas](#) are beings like Jesus, Buddha, Moses, Padmasambhava, Milarepa, Krishna, Joan of Arc — great, great beings that are very hard for us to understand, because they are so high in development, so very far from our level of understanding. They are very hard for the other beings to comprehend, and that is why oftentimes we kill them. We persecute them. We crucify them. We torture them. We hate them, even though they come here because they love us and want to help us.

So, on the [Tree of Life](#), we see all of the worlds represented in a symbolic way. We are all down here in [Malkuth](#) in our psychical bodies. Below us, symbolically speaking, is the hell realms. We are all really [demons](#), quite demonic, because of the nature of our psyches. Our psyches are constituted by pride, animal instincts, lust. So that aspect relates to the lowest levels of nature, very dense, very complicated, with a lot suffering because of karma, cause and effect.

Those that purify themselves, elementals and Nirvanis, gradually raise their level of being so that they reside in subtle levels, higher levels and they are not bound by as much suffering as we are. They achieve those levels through gradual processes, working little by little, lifetime by lifetime, depending on the idiosyncrasies of that particular being. The elementals are in the lowest levels here, and the Nirvanis, Elemental Buddhas, those that have some degree of the soul. [bodhisattvas](#) are another matter.

The elemental Buddhas, Nirvanis, reside in the fifth and sixth dimensions, depending on their degree of attainment. They can take physical bodies from time to time and work in the physical world, but usually they try to remain in the heavens enjoying their powers and their status. The [bodhisattvas](#) renounce all of that. They renounce terrestrial rewards and they renounce heavenly rewards. They want to return directly to the Absolute, the Emptiness, the Ain Soph. Why? This is particularly difficult for us to understand. This is because all we really know about is our desires, our egos. We cannot imagine not having them. We are like people who have lived in prison their whole lives, and when the doors opened, they are too scared to go out, because they do not know what is outside. They cannot conceive of anything outside of the cage, the prison. We are like that. We are too terrified to look outside, where it is light. We are too accustomed to the darkness of our mind.

Similarly, the Nirvanis, the elemental buddhas, are so accustomed to their own level of development that they do not comprehend anything beyond that. They do not understand the Emptiness, the Absolute, and they do not care to. They have no interest; they just want more power, they want to

sustain themselves in the degree that they have acquired, and they want more followers. They want more people to worship them, follow them, and appreciate them.

The [bodhisattvas](#) focus completely on purging themselves of all ties to everything, in every level of existence. They purge themselves of everything in order to become nothing, to become the Emptiness itself. It is stated in mysticism that “[God](#) searches the Nothingness in order to fill it.” This is what the [bodhisattva](#) seeks: to become nothing. The [bodhisattva](#) seeks to comprehend the nature of the Absolute, and then become it, to be its expression, to be its vessel. This is accomplished by walking that path. It sounds abstract; it sounds strange. It sounds hard to understand, and it is, but hopefully as we go through this lecture, it will make more sense to you.

Nagarjuna, who is a great Buddhist teacher from India, said in one of his treatises,

“Those who do not understand emptiness will fail to achieve liberation. Thus, ignorant beings wander helplessly in the prison of the six cyclic existences.”

This statement is quite profound, and is hard to fully grasp the meaning, because to understand it, you need to understand what liberation means, and what emptiness means.

We wrongly associate this word emptiness with “a lack of anything.” We think it means “a voidness of existence,” something that has nothing, that is nothing. But that is not what is really implied by the word emptiness. Emptiness is technical word. When you read a Buddhist scripture or a spiritual scripture, emptiness does not mean “a lack.” Our [ego](#) wants “more” so we hear this concept of emptiness and we say, “Oh, I do not want that.” Notice that “I.” We want more: more bliss, more pleasure! That is what we want with our spirituality, if you are really sincere with yourself, you will see that. What we really want is more pleasure. That means we do not understand karma. We do not understand cause and effect, and how it functions in nature. We do not grasp that the more you indulge in pleasure, the more you spin the wheel towards pain. We do not grasp that. We need to learn that. In other words, in that spiritual desire, you can see how easy it would be to become attached to pleasures in the realms of the gods. Yet, that level is still bound “in the prison of the six cyclic existences.” Emptiness is that which is beyond both pain and pleasure. Emptiness refers to very specific aspect of the Bhavachakra, which is quite technical and quite complicated, and we have not gone into in this course because when we talk about it, everyone falls asleep. It is called pratityasamutpada — even when I say just the word, people's eyes glaze over.

Pratityasamutpada is an ancient word from a Pali language that is very hard to translate into English. Translations include “dependent origination, interdependence.”

To understand the emptiness is to understand prakrityasumutpara, the interdependence of all things, the dependent origination of all things, which is the Ain Soph, the Absolute, the primordial archetype at the base of all things.

What this statement from Nagarjuna is saying is because we do not understand reality, which is the Absolute, we continually recycle through nature, whether we become gods or [demons](#). We can rise to become gods, demigods, Nirvanic Buddhas, but they fall. The [demons](#) rise and become gods, and then they fall, too. Beings are migrating this way, up and down, around the wheel, continually, for aeons. What is the purpose? What do they gain from this? It seems absurd, and the reason is simply stated here. They do not grasp that behind the wheel is the very purpose of existence, which is the Absolute, the Emptiness, the Ain Soph. Only the [bodhisattvas](#) can reach that level of understanding.

So think about this for a moment; imagine all of the beings all of the minerals, all of the plants, all the animals, all of the humanoids, not only on this planet, but on all the uncountable number of planets throughout all of existence — trillions and trillions and trillions of beings cycling through nature, being born and dying, again and again. And then also, the [demons](#) and the demigods and the gods, an incomprehensible number of living things bound to this wheel, clutching and clawing to get “a little more,” and when they get it, they may hold it briefly, then it is taken away. Down they go again.

Really, look at that, because we are bound in that, whether we are in the level of a demon, a animal, a human being, a demigod. It is really the same. Whatever we have now will not last. Why? Because of emptiness, because of dependent origination, because of impermanence, because of the Absolute, because of how nature functions. But we do not understand it.

At the core of our wheel of becoming are those three forces. The most important one is ignorance, “avidya” in Sanskrit, which is a lack of knowing. We can also use the Greek term “agnostic.” People use that term now to say, “I do not believe anything” but what they are really saying is, “I do not know anything. I am ignorant.” Agnostic literally means “a lack of knowledge.” It is really absurd to see people calling themselves agnostic; it is really like saying, “I am ignorant.” That is really what they are saying; it is sad. They are really displaying a profound lack of knowledge. It is sad, because that is why they suffer. To escape the prison of the six cycles of existence, we need knowledge of emptiness.

We need to comprehend the Absolute. That is why we always talk about it. That is why Master Samael always talks about it. It is absurd to see his students avoid studying the Absolute, when understanding the Absolute is the very root of liberation.

The Root of Liberation

Milarepa said,

"Karmas, trouble, hindrances, and habitual psychological manifestations can only be killed by cultivating Bodhichitta and contemplating the Absolute." - Milarepa, Guiding Instructions on the Bardo

Milarepa is a very great [bodhisattva](#). He is most renowned in Tibet, partly because he was the first Tibetan to reach complete self realization; so, he is a hero amongst the people. What is most remarkable about him is that he stated out as black magician, killing people for revenge. He learned magic, [Tantra](#), in order to get revenge, in order to kill, and he did it. Then he learned his lesson, and he learned about the kind of power that he had, and he repented and worked very rigorously for the remainder of his days in that body, and become a great [bodhisattva](#). He told his disciples, his last teaching was simply this,

"Meditate! Everything that I have accomplished is from [Meditation](#)."

Students do not like to hear that. We like to hear easy answers. The real path is not easy. We want everything given to us on plate with a spoon and fork.

He is pointing out here how to walk the path: cultivate bodhichitta and contemplate the Absolute. So we need to understand what these terms mean, because all of us, obviously, have a lot of troubles. We have many habitual psychological tendencies and many hindrances. The only way that we can really become liberated from them is a very deep comprehension.

To me, his statement is particularly interesting. It would be easy to read that and sort of walk away and say, "Yes, that's profound, okay," and think that was all, but really he is giving a profound clue in this statement, and this is something I want to point out to you specifically about studying scripture. You cannot grasp scripture with your intellect. That is impossible. Scripture was not written for your intellect. When you read scripture, you have to read it with your [Consciousness](#), with your heart, and the best way is to just read a little bit and then meditate a lot. You will get a lot from that.

This sentence, in particular, offers very deep and profound teachings. This is like a precious gem, and inside of it is an incredible power, very beautiful, very profound, but to acquire it, you have to put it into practice; I am going to give you a little hint about that, and we are going to talk about it for the rest of the lecture.

The parts of this sentence are not accidental. There is very profound relationship in how this sentence has been structured, how this scripture is delivered. There is a very specific relationship there between the two elements of this statement: karma, troubles, and habitual psychological manifestations, and bodhichitta and comprehending the Absolute. Study that relationship.

Cultivate Bodhichitta

So he says we need to "cultivate bodhichitta." Let us understand what that means.

Bodhichitta is Sanskrit word. We have talked about it a lot. If you have studied Buddhism, you have heard it a lot. Loosely translated, bodhichitta means "awakening mind-heart."

Bodhi means "perfect knowledge" or "wisdom," but it does not mean wisdom like clever sayings or the smart advice that you get from your grandmother (although there might be wisdom in it). Bodhi specifically refers to cognizance, which is a kind of understanding, a comprehension, specifically related to the sephiroth [Chokmah](#) and [Binah](#). In another term, we can call it prajna.

In Sanskrit, prajna is the highest paramita [perfection; virtue] on the [bodhisattva](#) path. The "wisdom that penetrates" has two syllables: pra and jna. Pra means "before, very, beyond," and jna means "knowledge." So Bodhichitta — this wisdom, cognizance, understanding — is directly pointing at prajna, and prajna is this type of knowledge related with the sephirah [Daath](#) on the [Tree of Life](#). It is a type of knowledge at the heights, related with the world of Atziluth, related with the Sambogakaya and Nirmanakaya of the trikaya. These are bodies of the Buddhas. These are very, very elevated levels of comprehension.

Chitta means "mind-heart," not intellect. It means our psyche itself. It does not mean the intellect in the brain, and it does not mean the emotional center in the heart. Chitta, "mind-heart," refers to our astral and mental bodies. Our [Astral body](#) is that part of our [Consciousness](#) that reflects emotional understanding. The [Mental body](#) reflects conceptual understanding. The emotional understanding of the [Astral body](#) reflects into our emotional center related to the heart, while the conceptual

understanding of the [Mental body](#) reflects into the intellectual center in the brain. Nevertheless, one thing is the understanding itself, and another thing is the reflection of it in the centers.

All of us have lunar mental and astral bodies. We are just elementals from nature. Or our astral and mental bodies, our chitta, is at the level of animals. You do not have to believe me, simply watch your mind. Watch how much of your mind is animal in its attention, only concerned with eating, sleeping, going to bathroom, competing with others, and sex. That is pretty much it. Ninety percent of our thoughts are about eating, sleeping, going to bathroom, competing with others, and sex. Is it not true? Anybody deny it? We are animals. We need to change, and become human beings. To do that, we need a solar chitta: mind-heart. That is a psyche, a “soul,” that can convey more energy, and is more pure. So, bodhichitta means “awakening mind-heart,” but that is attained in levels.

Commonly, the way that this is taught — and I want to point this out because this is a very profoundly related with the point of the lecture — the way most people hear about bodhichitta is in the foundational way, the way it is taught in the Sutrayana schools, which are commonly called Hinayana or Theravada (southern Buddhism). In these traditions, bodhichitta is taught as altruism or compassion, related to the longing to become a great being, a Buddha, in order to help other beings.

In Sutrayana, bodhichitta is taught as the altruistic intention to attain enlightenment for the benefit of suffering beings.

That is a very beautiful goal, and all religions share this intention, and all religions have their own ways of presenting the goal of spirituality. This type of goal is to express love, to care for others, to serve the poor, to help the sick, and the needy. All of those intentions are related to becoming pure and cultivating bodhichitta. But the very beginning level is called Sutrayana because its the most personal, most foundational way of understanding bodhichitta, which they call metta, compassion, love.

In the Mahayana, or the greater vehicle, the understanding of bodhichitta becomes deeper. At the level of the Mahayana teachings, bodhichitta is taught as not only compassion, the wish to help others, but a wish that is fueled by the understanding of the Absolute, which is founded upon the understanding of how karma relates to reality, that the cause and effect relationship does not have to be as it is.

In Mahayana: bodhichitta is taught as awareness (discriminative awareness; prajna) that perceives the Absolute (Sunyata, Emptiness).

Stated in another way, in the Sutrayana level, we see our suffering and we want to escape it, and we start to see the suffering of others and we want to help them escape it. And we start to understand that we are creating our own suffering, because of our pride, anger, etc., and we see that others are doing the same thing. We want to help them overcome that, to stop producing suffering. That is the Sutrayana level.

That comprehension of karma — not the intellectual idea but to actually see it in our lives and in the lives of others — is the beginning of starting to see the nature of the Emptiness. It is the beginning of comprehending, to see how all things move in relation to each other. Emptiness, the Absolute, is the space in which all things move, and everything is moving. Existence moves because of cause and effect. Starting to see that is a mark of the Mahayana understanding of bodhichitta. It is compassion, but it is a compassion based upon seeing how nature works, and understanding there is another way. So, when someone really comprehends how cause and effect are based upon the Absolute, and is really understanding that in their experience of existence, to go further they are given the teaching of Tantrayana. At that level, they are taught what bodhichitta really means. The word bodhichitta also means sexual energy.

In Tantrayana, bodhichitta means the seminal fluids of the body. The Tibetan word for bodhichitta is byan-sems, which means both “enlightenment mind” and “[semen](#).”

The Tibetan the word for bodhichitta means two things at the same time. It means the awakening mind, and it also means the sexual energy. It is the same word; that is not an accident. There is a reason for that.

Now let us understand that the word bodhichitta, awakened mind heart, means all of this and more. Bodhichitta is energy, intelligence, light, matter, [Consciousness](#), all at the same time. Bodhichitta is a way of seeing, acting, being, feeling. It is a way of being in touch with the divine. It is a way of comprehension. It is a light, and all of that emerges out of the Absolute.

Another word for bodhichitta, if you want a Greek word for it, is Christ. It is the same thing. Christ is a force in nature. It is most condensed and most powerful in our sexual energy. It is our power of creation, of becoming.

When we harness that energy spiritually, through our comprehension of the Absolute, we awaken [Consciousness](#) very rapidly. That is why Tantrayana has been so protected, because it is a doorway to

so much power. Remember, power is an energy: it can create or destroy. If you give power to a demon, they will destroy.

So now, in this day and age, these teachings are being made open and available to everyone, and many [demons](#) are learning this. Many [demons](#) in the world are now learning to harness their sexual forces and use those energies, but they are not changing psychologically. They are not eliminating their pride, anger, and envy. They continue to nurse and protect and grasp onto the same habitual tendencies that they have always had, which means they are now getting much stronger, much more powerful, and they are awakening [Consciousness](#) as [demons](#).

On the other hand, if we work seriously to understand what bodhichitta really means, and we work seriously to eliminate these tendencies from ourselves, liberation is the natural outcome.

So, about this Samael Aun Weor stated,

"The Bodhichitta is the awakened and developed superlative [Consciousness](#) of the Being. The Bodhichitta emerges in the aspirant who sacrifices himself for his fellowmen, long before the Mercurial bodies have been created... It is necessary for the Bodhichitta, which means the auric embryo, the awakened [Consciousness](#), to fall into the Illuminated Void [the Absolute]." - Samael Aun Weor

This statement from Samael Aun Weor is very deep, and I do not expect everyone here to grasp it for the brief time that we are studying here, but let me point out something very important. First of all, "bodhichitta is the awakened and superlative [Consciousness](#) of the Being," the Innermost. Secondly, "bodhichitta emerges long before the mercurial bodies have been created." This is extremely significant.

Creating the solar bodies — the astral, mental, and causal bodies — is important. We have talked about this many times; It is discussed in all the books. It is discussed in all the lectures. The creation of those bodies is what helps us to raise our level of being which binds us in this level, and gives us the ability to transmit more light, but it has nothing to do, ultimately, with liberation. It sounds strange, doesn't it? Solar bodies have nothing to do with liberation? What am I talking about?

There are many, many beings in this universe with solar bodies. So what? They are still bound to the wheel of becoming. They are not liberated. They have the solar bodies, but they still have the [ego](#). They could be [demons](#). They could be human beings. They could be gods. Yet, they are still bound to the same cycle of recurrence, rising and falling, again and again. Even having solar bodies, what good is that doing them? So many schools nowadays focus intensely on the solar bodies, and quite foolishly, because the solar bodies do not liberate us from suffering. Comprehension does. Elimination of the [ego](#) does. Understanding the Absolute does.

Samael states clearly here, "The bodhichitta emerges long before the mercurial bodies have been created." How does it emerge? Through sacrifice for others, altruism, compassion, generosity, sacrifice. This word sacrifice is really critical, as well. You see here that "bodhichitta emerges in the aspirant who sacrifices himself." What does sacrifice mean? We have a very clear example in our tradition of sacrifice, one that is often overlooked. It is the story of Abraham. Abraham represents our Innermost.

"And it came to pass after these things, that Elohim did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

"And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which [God](#) had told him.

"Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

"And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

"And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.



Isaac (the [bodhisattva](#)) carries his karma as he ascends towards his sacrificial death. Remember Jesus carrying his cross towards Calvary?

“And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

“And Abraham said, My son, [God](#) will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

“And they came to the place which [God](#) had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

“And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.” - Genesis 22

Can you imagine for a father to kill his son, the emotional impact, the pain? That scripture is there to point that out. That is the nature of sacrifice; it is painful. Sacrifice is to do what must be done, to follow the commandments of [God](#), and to accept the pain.

Abraham represents our Innermost. Therefore, our soul is Isaac, who is on the altar to be sacrificed.

Certainly, when we walk this path, we feel that we are being placed on the altar to be sacrificed.

Now, if you do not know the story he does not kill his son.

“And the messenger of [הוהי](#) called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

“And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest [God](#), seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

“And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.” - Genesis 22

Who is the ram, the animal? It is our mind. That is what must die.

That path to liberation is about sacrificing ourselves. It is through that pain of renouncing our pleasure, renouncing our comforts, and seeking only to serve divinity and humanity that the bodhichitta begins to emerge in us.

To combine all of this together, Bodhichitta clearly defined is when we have learned to restrain our sexual forces, to transform them, to renounce animal desire, and to take all of our creative power — physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually — and dedicate it to the well-being of others, to help eliminate suffering, to serve what our Innermost wants us to do in that regard. And in that, our creative power does create. It creates the bodhichitta, it creates a new mind, a new way of seeing, a new way of being, a new way of acting, a new way of understanding. This is what creates the auric embryo. This is not a theory. This is not something vague. It is something that exists, yet is only known by those who are making it.

The auric embryo is light. Auric means “lights”; an embryo is something that is growing, a baby, a seed. We are that seed. The auric embryo is the Christ child, the bodhichitta, that emerges within us when we learn to behave this way. The auric embryo begins in the vital body, the sephirah [Yesod](#), which is the [Hebrew](#) word for the “foundation.” This is the foundation of our temple; it is the stone upon which the entire structure needs to be based.

Now, if we walk one of these other paths, say we want to become a resident of “Nirvana,” we want to create the solar bodies, we can raise the [Kundalini](#) in the physical and vital bodies and that would be great, and we would have light in those bodies. We can go on to create the astral, mental, and causal bodies, and we can become a buddha, an angel, and that's great. It is a beautiful path. Truly, those are beautiful beings. But none of that has anything to do with Bodhichitta. The residents of Nirvana — great buddhas, saints, angels — are not required to have bodhichitta; a few might have bodhichitta developed a little bit, but to really have bodhichitta developed is something found only in a [bodhisattva](#), a walker of the direct path.

Bodhichitta is a different kind of mind, a different kind of light. That auric embryo that emerges in the vital body is how the Christ, bodhichitta, is setting the stage for the eventual emergence into the soul, to completely remove that soul from the wheel, and to incarnate into that soul as a Christ. The bodhichitta is the beginning of that, the middle of that, and the ending of that. Stated simply bodhichitta is the aura of Christ.

There are levels and levels and levels of bodhichitta. Jesus has incredible bodhichitta — stunning, astonishing, unbelievable bodhichitta. His power of sacrifice and his radiant light are incomprehensible, even to the gods. Even the gods, who live in those high realms, can scarcely look at Yeshua because of the radiance of his light, his bodhichitta. They simply cannot comprehend his bodhichitta. That is how serious this is.

So, in us, through sacrificing ourselves, through comprehending the Absolute, we start to develop bodhichitta, and it is based in the transmutation of sexual energy. You cannot escape that. You cannot create bodhichitta if you are expelling your sexual energy. It is impossible. The bodhichitta — Christ — is the sexual force itself. The sexual energy is the creative power of [God](#). That is why all religions require the restraint and control of that force. That is why Buddhists who follow the tantric paths in Buddhism take vows to restrain that energy and transform it, and they learn many techniques for that, relative to what school they follow. But nowadays, most Buddhists ignore the sexual aspect; they do not follow it. Therefore, they are not really developing bodhichitta. Without the containment and transformation of the sexual energy, it is impossible to develop bodhichitta, since bodhichitta is in itself the same force. How can you develop something that is being wasted? Impossible.

“With the dignity of vajra holder [a holy deity],
the vajra [phallus] with lotus enters the lotus [vagina].
With lingam [phallus] placed into the bhaga [vagina],
the yogi performs [the mantra] hum phat;
the bodhichitta [sexual energy] is not emitted [through [orgasm](#)].



“One's own secret-area five-pointed vajra [male sexual organ] marked with a lotus enters the consort's lotus [female sexual organ]. Within that state the yogi holds the dignity of being the vajra-holder main deity Kakalchakra, he utters the syllables hum phat, and dwells within the activity of [sexual] union arising from placing the father's lingam into the mother's bhaga. This brings the elemental bodhicitta [sexual energy] down to the tip of the jewel [sexual organs], where it is not to be emitted [through [orgasm](#)].” - Quoted from Ornament of Stainless Light, an Exposition of Kalachakra [Tantra](#), by Khedrug Norsang Gyatso (15th century AD).

The only way to develop bodhicitta is to cultivate *tig le*, which is Tibetan word that means sexual energy, and the only way that can happen is to restrain that force. In other words, those who want to develop bodhicitta must renounce the [orgasm](#). They must renounce animal desire.

Now, let us look at ourselves. We are not at the level of having bodhicitta developed yet, but we need to know what it is. You cannot create something unless you know what you intend to create. (Ok, you can create a child without knowing what you are doing; you can get pregnant, but you cannot create a soul or a buddha. You cannot create a master or bodhicitta unless you know what you are doing, so we need to look seriously at ourselves.)

The seventh Dalai Lama said,

"Samsara is one's continuum of rebirth into the contaminated aggregates." - Seventh Dalai Lama
I have pointed this out in all the lectures of this series because it is so important. We forget this all the time. We are in samsara now, because that is the state of our psychology. Samsara means “circling,” and we are constantly repeating ourselves. The wheel of becoming is our very mind, and we are trapped in that because of our misperception. So, this “rebirth into the contaminated aggregates” refers to what we have now, what we are now.

Buddhism says there are five aggregates, skandhas, which means “a collection, a heap, an amalgamation,” and the example that we always give is concrete. To make concrete, to pour our sidewalks and streets, you mix together different things to create that. Concrete is an aggregate. We are like that, too, in different levels.

Skandhas: Aggregates

- rūpa: form / matter
- vedanā: sensation / feeling
- samjñā: perception / conception / cognition / discrimination
- saṃskāra: mental formations / impulses / volition / compositional factors
- vijñāna: [Consciousness](#) / discernment

Our physical body is an aggregate of many things. It is called rupa, “form.” This aggregate is the physical body.

The physical body has the ability to perceive sensations; that is vedanā.

We perceive sensation through perception, through cognition, samjñā.

We are able to recognize between what we perceive because of mental formation, which is saṃskāra.

We are able to discern those differences because of vijñāna.

We have given lectures about the skandas already. I am pointing this out to remind you, and also to point out that none of these are yourself. In spite of our mistaken perception of ourselves, we are not the body, we are not sensations, we are not perceptions, we are not mental formation, neither are we the discernment of them, but we always forget all of this. We think we are what we experience through the aggregates, but that is a misperception. It is ignorance (avidya). That is why we are suffering. We are continuing repeating ourselves in Samsara, repeating, circling, repeating again and again because we are very hypnotized by the skandhas, and our skandhas are contaminated with attachment, hostility, malice, ignorance, craving, aversion, pride, etc.

These five aggregates are symbolized on the Bhavachakra by the five skulls at the top. The five skulls are a crown that represent how the figure that is grasping the wheel has that power: he has power because of the five skandhas, the aggregates.



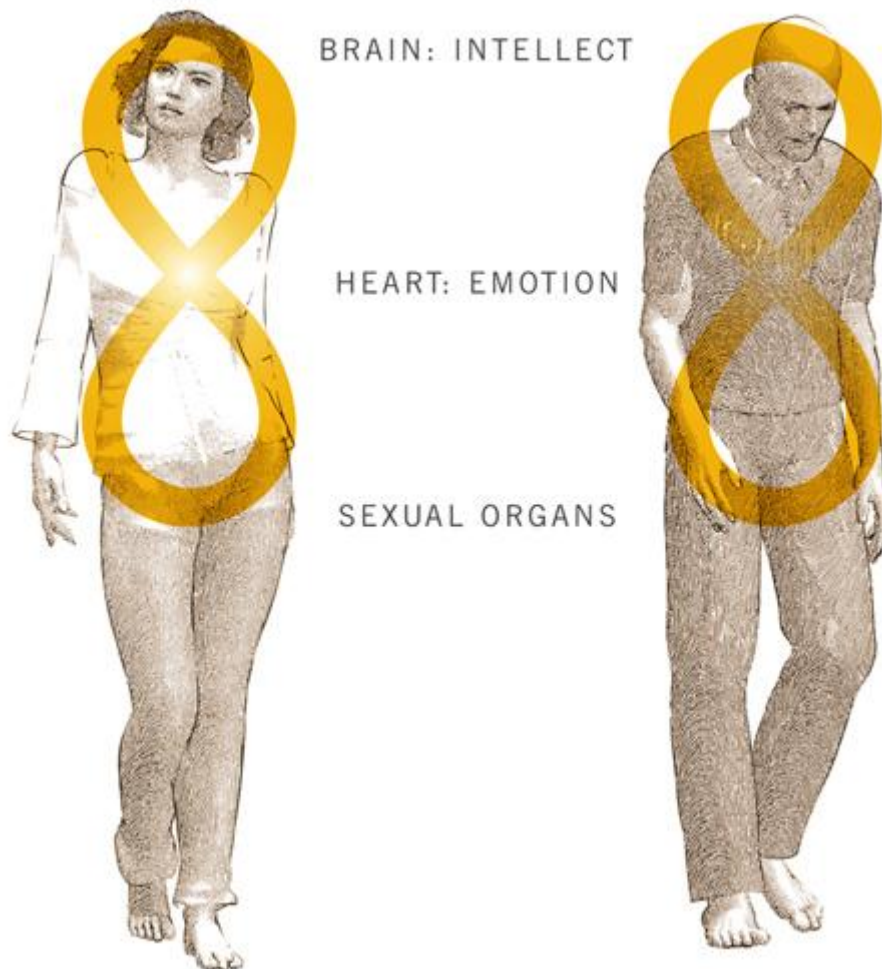
We give that power to Yama, the [God](#) of death, because we do not dominate consciously our own skandhas. We are not cognizant, aware, awake. We are very mechanical. We do not really perceive or observe the aggregates at all: we do not see the reality of any form or matter, any sensation, any perception, any mental formation. We are not really aware of any of it. Life and death are just “happening” to us. We take in enormous amounts of data continually, and we are constantly thinking and thinking and thinking, or feeling and feeling and feeling, without any comprehension, without really seeing what is going on. We never have the awareness that wonders, “Why am I seeing these things? Why am I feeling these things? How? How does it happen and then what happens after? What is the cause and effect relationship between matter, sensation, perception, mental formation and discernment? How does it all work?” We have no idea. That is why we are circling, repeating, repeating, repeating: because of ignorance.

When you seriously begin to observe yourself, you start to realize that everything you are thinking today, feeling today, is the same as yesterday. It is the same as yesterday, and the day before that, with only slight changes, slight modifications. We are always repeating the same habits physically, mentally, and emotionally.

So, observe that wheel circling in yourself, cycling again and again and again. That is why Padmasambhava said,

“Samsara, ‘circling,’ is to spin from one place to another. Nirvana is to have cut through this circling.”

- Padmasambhava, The Cycle of Vital Points



So, we are the wheel, and that repetition is processing through our [three brains](#): through our intellect, heart, bodies, especially through or sexual organs, which is the root of all of our energy, constantly repeating. Never learning anything new, always seeking distraction, diversion. Why? What do we want to be diverted from, distracted from? Suffering? Things we think we cannot change? Things we think we already know?

This cycle is depicted here as a figure eight, but really, if you observe that, that figure eight is just a circle, twisted. Do you see that? It is twisted because it is continually spinning. That is the symbol of the infinite. Its center is the heart. Why is that? If I said, “Hey, you,” you say, “Who, me?” and you point to your heart. This is where the root of ourselves is most deeply connected. This is where our Innermost communicates with us. This is where our Divine Mother communicates with us. This is where Christ communicates with us: in the heart. This is where we feel the most pain. Really, as much physical pain as we can feel, as much mental torment as we can feel, the worst suffering we can ever feel is in the heart. There is no question about that. Conversely, the most beauty, the most joy, and the most incredible sensations we can feel are in the heart, not physically. Everyone is out searching for physical sensations or mental stimulations, but really, the greatest experiences we can ever have are in relation to the heart.

So, this image represents how we suffer, how through our misperceptions of external and internal things, we wrongly transform impressions. We misunderstand what we see and feel and think, and thus we act out of misunderstanding, and thus we create suffering. To cut through that is to begin to see this process in motion, in ourselves. We have to see the process and change it, and here is how you do that. The Dalai Lama said,

“...[bodhisattvas](#) are beings who, out of intense compassion, never shift their attention away from sentient beings; they are perpetually concerned for the welfare of all beings, and they dedicate themselves entirely to securing that welfare.” - 14th Dalai Lama

If you want full and complete liberation from suffering — forever — this is how you do it: stop worrying about yourself. Stop feeding your desires. Stop feeding your pride. Stop listening to your envy, anger, lust. Begin to recognize that as much as you satisfy any given desire, it will never be satisfied, and will only seek more. Furthermore, every time you do feed a desire, it corrupts the rest of your life. You feel guilty; you feel shame. You feel darkness, heaviness, regret; other people reject

you. You lose what good you did have, and things begin to descend. The cycle, your trajectory, goes down. Yet, if you embrace serving others, cultivating compassion for others and insight into reality, the Absolute, you spin that trajectory upwards. You cultivate bodhichitta. To repeat: that only happens with transmutation and with a psychological revolution.

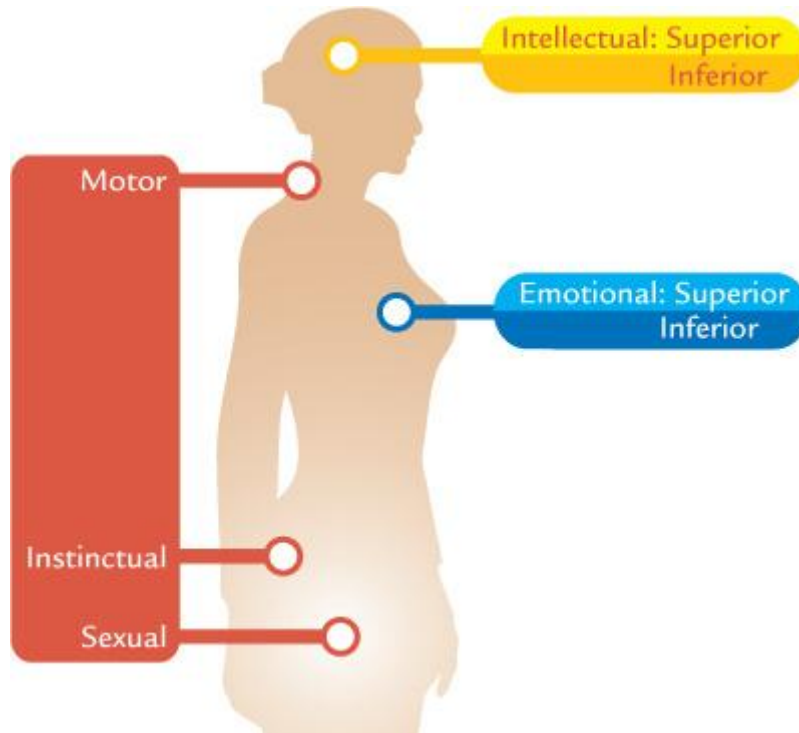
So how do we do that? I know this is a lot of philosophical and somewhat technical information, but it is not complicated. It is actually very practical. It is not hard to do in terms of the steps. What makes it hard is to change. Really, changing is not easy. Changing ourselves is hard.

So, we begin here and now. Who are we? We have to observe ourselves. That is hard. We have to look at our [three brains](#), constantly watching and understanding how they work with each other in external things and with internal things. We have to understand how the three forces work through us, and move through our [three brains](#), our three nervous systems, intellect, emotion, and body. We start to see how they function, how thoughts process, what causes them, what sustains them, and what they result in. And the same thing with emotions and with physical actions.

Steps to Liberation from Suffering

There are four steps to achieve liberation; these steps were taught by Tsong Khapa, a reincarnation of the Buddha Shakyamuni. This is from the teachings of Lam-rim, which are considered to be the most important teachings of Buddhism after the Buddha.

1. Recognize afflictions / delusions
2. Perceive what allows them to arise
3. Perceive how they arise
4. Perceive the faults of afflictions / delusions



We need to recognize our afflictions. We need to know what afflictions are. We do not even know that. We are the prisoners in the cage who only know the cage and have no idea what is outside the cage.

We need to analyze our cage and recognize what is causing suffering for ourselves and others.

How do we define an affliction? Classically, in Buddhism an affliction is anything that disturbs the mindstream. It sounds very broad, because it is. So then we need to know what is the mindstream and what is it that disturbs it. Your continuity of [Consciousness](#), awake, here and now, [Consciousness](#), that is mindstream. It is called "stream" because it is always flowing. It is called mind because it is your chitta, here and now.

So if you are not here and now, then you are under the sway of an affliction, because your mindstream is not here and now. You are disturbed; you are distracted. You are thinking about work, that vacation you are going to take. You are thinking about that problem you are going to solve, or that emotional difficulty you are having, etc.

Yet, you can be here and now, aware of your body, paying attention, and still have an affliction.

Firstly, you are here and now. Secondly, you notice, "I have some pain. I have some anxiety. I have some discomfort. I have some kind of conflict, intellectually, emotionally, physically." All of those would be classified as afflictions.

Yet, afflictions are not limited to those we in our current state would call “unpleasant.” Remember: afflictions include anything that disturbs the mindstream away from its natural state. In other words, anything that causes us to forget our true nature. So, we enjoy pride, and feel great when we are envied by others, yet pride is an affliction. We enjoy attention, and crave it, yet when we get it and feel “ourselves” in attention from others, that is an affliction, because that “self” we are feeling is not real. It is an illusion.

To understand what is and is not an affliction, we have to meditate, and become experienced in accessing the natural state of being, the [Consciousness](#) unrestrained, unconditioned. We call this state samadhi. Only in this way, with this experience, can anyone then understand what afflictions are. In our tradition, we have broad categories for our afflictions. We call them pride, greed, envy, lust, anger, etc. These are very broad terms. They are not very specific. They are very broad. The reality is that we have tens of thousands of afflictions. They are all different, and everyone of us is different, with different afflictions. Moreover, all of them have so-called “positive, pleasant” faces, as well as “negative, unpleasant” ones.

In Buddhism, they talk about ten fundamental afflictions, but even those are not fully comprehensive. They are just ten generalized afflictions.

What we need to understand is that anything that impacts our cognizance of the present moment and causes us to misperceive reality is an affliction. So, looked at in that way, we can say that all of us pretty much have only experienced afflictions as far back as we can remember. This is because to experience the state of not having an affliction is to experience samadhi, ecstasy, bliss. This is a state in which the [Consciousness](#) perceives as it should, with serenity, clarity, insight, and understanding, without any vagueness, but also accompanied with a great sense of peace and love. That is the natural state of our [Consciousness](#). It is a state of penetrating insight accompanied by love. In that state of [Consciousness](#), you can perceive the Absolute, the Emptiness. It sounds strange, but it is not a mystical thing. It is not something otherworldly or fantastical. The perception of reality is not something spectacular like you see on television. The perception of reality is the natural state of existence. The natural state of our [Consciousness](#) is to see reality. Our current state is abnormal, fantastical, strange. The Absolute is in everything. It is behind everything. It is inside of everything; everything is in it. The Absolute is nature of existence itself, and it is possible to perceive it at any level of being provided you can manage to take the [Consciousness](#) out of its state of affliction long enough to see reality, but no one can do that for you. You have to do it yourself. It is as if you want to take your skin off and look out. To learn to do that, we learn to meditate.

[Meditation](#)

Real [Meditation](#) is not “spacing out.” It is not to become disassociated with reality. In fact, [Meditation](#) is a state of perception that sees reality.

[Meditation](#) is not a way of avoiding our problems; it is a way that we look into them, to see the causes of them, and to break those causes.

That is why the first step to liberation is to recognize afflictions. We must know what they are: they are the causes of suffering. If you cannot recognize the causes of your suffering, you cannot cure it. We have to recognize it in motion in ourselves, in our [three brains](#), all the time.

Then we need to see what allows these three things to happen. “Why is it that these afflictions emerge? How is that they are here with me? How is it that I am victimized by them? What is it that allows these three things to emerge? How did I create them?” Because you did; no one gave them to you. [God](#) certainly did not give them to you. You made them yourself.

Classically speaking, this step is super-important but easy to misunderstand. This second step is to perceive what allows them to arise. It would be easy to assume, “Well, my anger is arising because of my wife.” Listen: we already think that way, but that is not the meaning of this. What allows our afflictions to arise in us is our mistaken perceptions. We believe that the self we are feeling is real. We think that “me, myself,” with “my name” and “my face, my heritage, my beliefs, my memories, my training, my education, my background, my family, all of the books I've read, etc, etc, etc,” is “myself” and that is wrong. That is personality.

Self is Atman [[study this course to learn about self and Atman](#)]. Self is Buddha, [Chesed](#), the Spirit, Abraham. That is Self. We do not see that; we do not see it because we are hypnotized by afflictions, skandhas, samskaras. We are hypnotized by our pride, fear, envy, etc. That is what allows our afflictions to arise, because we are continually in a state of hypnosis.

Hypnos is the name of the Greek [God](#) of sleep. [Gnosis](#) is the Greek word for knowledge. Hyp-[Gnosis](#) is “a lack of knowledge due to sleep.” We are all in a state of hypnosis. We are not awake. We see the

physical world and we think that is everything there is, and we see money, sex, and power, and think that is everything. We are wrong. That is why we suffer.

We need to see in ourselves how our misperception allows the afflictions to arise in us, and when they do arise, how we get hypnotized again. If someone says something harmful to us, we get annoyed. We get aggravated, angry, and we nurse it and feed it, and we say, "They are wrong! They should not have said that!" and we act against them in various ways; we keep the cycle going in ourselves over again and again. We build resentment, and that is why we suffer. You see, it is not complicated. We just need to look at ourselves, and we need to change how we see.

We need to see how afflictions arise. According to Tsong Kapa, this is quite a difficult step. It involves many things. He specifies six particular aspects of how they arise. It includes the basis of our psyche. For example, we are asleep. We know that from step one. We are mistakenly perceiving ourselves and mistakenly perceiving others. We believe that the sense of self that we feel is real and valid, and the person that hurt us is real and valid, and the words they said are real and valid, so therefore, we believe our anger is real and valid. That is all wrong. It is only valid because we believe it. That is the only reason. We do not see that we, ourselves, are what allowed all of that to arise. Because we believe it. We are hypnotized by anger, by pride.

"Certainly, the words of an insulter do not have any more value than that which the insulted person gives to them. Therefore, if the insulted person does not give any importance to them, I repeat, they remain like a check drawn against insufficient funds. By comprehending this, one transforms the impressions of those words. For instance, they are transformed into something different, into love, into compassion for the insulter. Naturally, this means transformation. Therefore, we need to be transforming impressions incessantly, not only the ones in the present, but also the ones of the past and of the future." - Samael Aun Weor, [The Revolution of the Dialectic](#)

So perceiving how afflictions arise is getting into the details, to look into the specifics in ourselves, in our mind, and in our environment also. We would not have felt that anger if that person had not criticized us; the anger was there inside of us, but took that scene for the anger to become visible. As we are now, hypnotized, when we feel that anger we react with hate towards the provoker. But through learning to work with bodhichitta, we learn to transform impressions. First, we see anger for what it is: an affliction. We do not let it hypnotize us. Next, realizing it has been a cause of suffering, we will feel grateful, because now, seeing it in ourselves, we can work to dissolve it, and be free of that suffering. We will feel grateful to the provoker: we will love them. We will cherish them, because they have helped us to make serious progress in our path towards purity. That is a sign that bodhichitta is emerging. That is a clear and definite sign that you are beginning to cultivate bodhichitta: when you feel love for the ones who hurt you. This is a mark of success (but do not feel proud, because then you'll go back down). Just recognize how this works, and look to recreate this scenario in your life. Don't force it. It will happen spontaneously when bodhichitta is real. When someone says something hurtful, you will feel pain because your pride is hurt, but if you transform the impression then you will spontaneously feel love for the person who said that. They really helped you. They showed you your anger. They showed you your pride. This is a simple thing, and it does not take effort. It only takes awareness. It only takes cognizance.

This is what in Tibetan is called lo jong: mind training.

Finally, to really seal it, we need to see the faults of the afflictions. We need to really see, to comprehend, to meditate on our afflictions, because right now we do not see the faults at all. Right now, all of us have enthroned our afflictions. We have put them in charge, and then we wonder why we suffer. We are suffering because we have put our own afflictions in charge of our lives. We have put our anger in charge, our lust, our jealousy, and our pride, mainly those. We need to meditate on their faults. Like this: Analyze pride. Do you feel anger? Why? Because your pride is hurt. Where will pride take you? Study cause and effect. Nature functions in very specific ways. When you analyze pride, you say, "Ok, if I continue to feed pride, where is it going to take me? Let us say I have another ten years to live. If I continue to build up my pride where is it going to take me? Ok, it might get me some money. It might get me respect. Then I am going to die, and then what? I will lose that social status and money. Then I am going to have this prideful baggage that is going to want even more in the next life."

What about anger? "Well, if I keep feeling this anger, what does anger do? Anger isolates. The only thing anger can do is destroy. Anger cannot create anything. It cannot create peace. It cannot create understanding. It cannot create harmony; it can only create conflict, war, discord, separation." Even if we intellectually know these things, we all have enormous anger, why? Do we all want peace? Do we

all want to feel connectedness? We all want to feel love and we all want to love. Anger is the obstacle, not the anger of the others, but our own.

Knowing something intellectually does not result in change. We need to understand the faults of the afflictions. We need to comprehend them. For that, we must meditate on them.

So, we need to meditate on these faults. After we have observed our egos during the day, when we get home at night, and we meditate on what we experienced, and consider, "Yes, I see I have lust. Yes, I have pride. I have to meditate on that." If you keep saying "Yes, I have lust. I see my lust. I have lust. I see this lust. etc." this approach goes nowhere. What we need to do is analyze it, to imagine the event. "Ok, I see this lust, what does it create? What can it create? What can it give?" We all know what lust wants, and we have all had the experience of what lust provides. It gives certain experiences, certain sensations, but then what comes after that? Everything is connected. Everything is interdependent. Remember, the one who understand the Emptiness, pratyasamutpada, are the ones who reach liberation. So, we cannot look at afflictions like lust in isolation. We need to see the lust in relation with everything else. Ok, so you have lust and you indulged in that, what did it create? Did it really make you feel good or did it make you feel bad? Did you feel like a good person after you indulged in that lust or did you feel guilty and remorseful? Did you have a better relationship with the person you engaged in lust or did the relationship get worse? Did you experience a greater expansion of your generosity, of your compassion, for your love of others, or did you experience an increasing desire, increasing lust, more anger, more fights, more strife, more craving? Analyze the whole picture. Look all of those cycles that I pointed out in the very beginning. How do these behaviors effect the trajectory of your moment to moment experience? Where are they going? Will pride take you to liberation? Will envy take you to liberation? Will lust? Will hate? Then, go further: imagine what would have happened if you had instead acted with virtue; how would a buddha behave in that event? How would Jesus behave? What would have been the virtuous way to behave? This is the meaning of this step: to meditate on them, to comprehend them, and that is why we have this graphic. I am not going to spend time on that because we have already talked about that.

So, to synthesize this, we will look at a quote from Samael Aun Weor.

"Succession does not exist for the Self-realized and Diamantine Spirit. Only the Eternal Present exists for Him. He lives from moment to moment. He has liberated Himself from the Twelve Nidanas." - Samael Aun Weor

Nidanas are the steps of pratyasamutpada. The twelve nidanas are the outer ring of the Wheel of Becoming. Those twelve nidanas are the twelve stages of dependent origination. They map out how things function, and they state: "Because of this, that happens. Because of that, this happens." It is a chain that binds us to suffering. It is a chain that repeats. It is recurrence. Succession, repetition, the repeating of series, does not exist for the one who is liberated. In other words, Abraham, [Chesed](#), Atman, our Spirit is not bound by that. We are, but full development, full realization, full liberation is the merger of ourselves with That. Full realization is the level of [Consciousness](#) in which there is no difference between us and That (the Absolute); to reach this level, the [ego](#) [afflictions] must be completely dissolved. Right now, we are bound on the wheel. When we liberate ourselves from the wheel we realize that we are the Self. This is the great teaching of Vedanta: we are the Self.

Fundamentally, in our root it is true, but in practical reality, right now, we are not, because of our ignorance, because we are trapped in suffering.

For our Being, only the eternal present exists. He lives from moment to moment, and when we reach liberation, he will have liberated Himself from the twelve nidanas. Who accomplishes that? Who accomplishes liberating the Being from the twelve nidanas? Only a [bodhisattva](#). No demon, no elemental, no Nirvani, no one on the spiral path can accomplish it. If you look all the way up in the corner of any graphic or painting of the Bhavachakra, we see a little path, a rainbow bridge, a bridge made out of light, and there are only a couple of beings walking on it. This is in comparison to all the beings that are trapped on the wheel. Those beings that are walking that path are walking the [bodhisattva](#) path, and they are walking that path up to the top. We see there the trinity: [Kether](#), [Chokmah](#), [Binah](#), which in Buddhism are called Dharmakaya, Sambokakaya, Nirmanakaya. That is the third mountain, the mountain of ascension. Again, that is a mountain only reached by the [bodhisattva](#). Then, when they reach that level, they reach full and complete development, they become a liberated being, a resurrected Master, a full and complete [bodhisattva](#), a Logos, a Mahatma. Then what do they do? They do not stay up in heaven. They do not forget the world. They descend back to help others. When you look at the Bhavachakra, you see [bodhisattvas](#) in the lower realms, even in hell, trying to help those beings understand the path. Thankfully, because without them, none of us would have this knowledge.

Questions and Answers

Audience: [Inaudible]

Instructor: When you look at the paintings, all of them are interpreted according to the tradition that the artists come from, so you always find little differences. In the graphic that we are using today, the painter just painted it that way, with the lowest realms the largest. If you look at this other one, the realms are all equal in size, so it is just a stylistic choice. These realms are depicted symbolically. Philosophically speaking, the sizes are really irrelevant, because when you really start to comprehend the nature of the [bodhisattva](#) path and the specific meanings of Samsara and Nirvana and the six realms, there is no difference between them. That is why in some traditions, those six realms are painted exactly equal, because the [bodhisattva](#) does not see the realms as better or worse than one another. A [bodhisattva](#) should not treat a demon differently from a [God](#), or a [God](#) differently from a demon, because both of them are trapped in suffering, and both of them need help, so from the point of view of the [bodhisattva](#) path, those six realms are the same. The creatures who are trapped in the six realms do not see it like that. Everyone thinks the realms of the gods is the best, but it is not. In some ways it is the worst.

Audience: You mentioned "Agnostics" in the lecture. Can you define the meaning of the word "Gnostic."

Instructor: Well, as I said in the lecture, a Gnostic is someone who has knowledge, not book knowledge, but experiential knowledge of what we are teaching here. An agnostic has no knowledge. Really, all of us who want to be Gnostic are still agnostic, because we still lack real knowledge. We might have memorized the teachings, but [Gnosis](#) comes from experience, not reading or listening. There are many people who claim to be Gnostic and are not, and there are many who claim to be agnostic and who really are that, and they do not realize it.

Audience: Were the teachings of Buddha and Jesus related to kabbalah according to the time period of which they taught?

Instructor: Of course. Every genuine religion is [Kabbalah](#), and so is every genuine science, art and philosophy. In order to understand what that means, we have to remember that [Kabbalah](#) does not belong to the Jews, in the same way that Buddhism does not belong to people from India, Thailand, Cambodia, or any other place. All religions emerged out of the Absolute, and were brought by [bodhisattvas](#) with compassion in order to help suffering beings, and those [bodhisattvas](#) bring the teaching in accordance with the idiosyncrasies of their own Being. They show the light of their Being — which has its own characteristics — and they modify that light and direct it to be best received by the ones receiving it. That means that the way Jesus taught was specific to those he taught, and the way Buddha taught was specific to those he taught; they both taught the same thing. Moreover, both taught in levels, since the students also had many levels. Some needed basics, while others needed deeper guidance.

There is only one light, but all of us are in ignorance and asleep, and since those two masters taught physically it has been over two thousand years, thus the light of their knowledge is not the same as what those Masters brought at that time, because that light has been written into books and been carried from mouth to ear for over two thousand years, and it has been changed and modified to fit our comforts. None of the religions on this planet are pure. None of them reflect the actual teachings given by their founding master. If you want the pure teachings, you have to awaken and go in the internal worlds to get it from the source; there, you will find Buddha, Krishna, Jesus, Moses, teaching the same thing. There is only one light; they use their own words, their own stories, their own way of presenting it, but it is the same light. So, [Kabbalah](#) is just a word used to describe how that word is projected, but it is the same light.

Audience: Is the modern notion of "self-love" and loving ourselves in direct opposition to every ancient philosophy and religious tradition which teach selflessness and love for others?

Instructor: The answer is absolutely yes. The modern notion of self-love is one hundred percent egotistical. There is no question about that.

"Materialistic psychology (experimental psychology) is good for nothing. Proof of this is the fact that materialistic psychology has not been able to solve the mental problems that affect the country of the United States." - Samael Aun Weor, [The Revolution of the Dialectic](#)

To put it bluntly, popular psychology and philosophy are demonic; that is, they have no knowledge of how the psyche (soul) relates to the divine. Whatever is divorced from the divine is demonic. Modern psychology has no basis in scripture or the wisdom of masters. Instead, it is a string of unproven theories and stumblings in the dark, which — by their own admission — has not cured anyone.

Modern psychology has no basis in reality. Modern psychology excludes everything inconvenient from its point of view, and seeks only to make the suffering, the confused, dependent upon the psychologist, much as the guilty sinner depends upon the priest — and both pay their confessor for the privilege.

The [demons](#) love themselves very much, and that is what classifies them as [demons](#). To merge with [God](#), “you” have to get out of the way. [God](#) cannot come into a space that you have already filled up with yourself. That is why [bodhisattvas](#) go straight to the Absolute to become nothing, to become empty, to open themselves up completely, to become a reflection, a transmitter of light, to not have any self and sense of self. It sounds scary to us, and it sounds contradictory, and it sound weird, because we feel like, “Oh, I won't be myself! I won't experience anything! I won't be me!” Yes, it is true, if you achieve that you will not be you; you will not suffer like you suffer. Instead, you will be pure, happy, a reflection of the divine, having the light of [God](#), ecstasy, love, wisdom, understanding, insight. You will lose the animal, suffering personality, but you will gain a Solar, divine personality. That is totally different. So, the modern philosophy of self-love is poison for the soul.

Jesus taught very clearly,

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” - Matthew 16

That is very clear. You cannot love yourself and deny yourself at the same time.

He also said,

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve [God](#) and mammon.” - Matthew 6

Mammon is worldliness, wealth, materialism, etc. You cannot be a slave of your self-interests and also serve [God](#).

In the Sufi tradition, it is quite clearly presented in many ways, especially in the poetry of Rumi. He describes explicitly, repeatedly, that we have to be consumed by the fires of [God](#), burnt up, completely obliterated, before we can know who we truly are.

“Knock, and He'll open the door

Vanish, and He'll make you shine like the sun

Fall, and He'll raise you to the heavens

Become nothing, and He'll turn you into everything.” — Rumi

So what we need is not self-love, but to follow the commandments:

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy [God](#) with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy Self. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." -

Matthew 22

Audience: Why does the [ego](#) want us dead?

Instructor: I have never heard that one. For most people, the [ego](#) want to be very much alive and does not want to die. There are some people who have suicidal tendencies, and that is because of the demonic, maniacal nature of certain egos. In the infernal worlds, killing is an expression of emotion; in hell, [demons](#) kill, yet the murdered one does not really die. Physically, you cannot do that; here, you will die physically. The problem is that because of how degenerated the mind is becoming, we are bringing the hell realms up into the physical world, so more and more we are see the behaviors of the hell realms here, physically. That is why people are going around killing each other and killing themselves. Those are “[demons](#)” possessing people — whether actual [demons](#) or just their own egos possessing them. In the hell realms, egos do that as an expression of emotion, anger. What does anger want? Anger wants to hurt. Anger does not care. Anger wants to hurt, because it feels hurt. It wants others to feel what it feels. It says, "I feel like this. I want you to feel how I feel," and it kills. This is why we dream about killing. Observe your mind; when you are angry, violence is easy to start. If you dream that someone is shooting or killing you it can be because they are angry with you. They are talking against you. They are mad at you internally, and thus internally they are killing you. If that person nourishes that anger too much, or if their personality has a very fundamental flaw, say their personality is broken, that [ego](#) will express itself physically and kill. That happens when the personality is fractured or broken, or if the [Consciousness](#) is completely absorbed in the [ego](#); there is no free [Consciousness](#) anymore. Their personality can be fine, but they have zero free [Consciousness](#). They are, classically, a demon, and they will kill and enjoy it, and have no regret. But even people who have some free [Consciousness](#), if the personality is broken, that [ego](#) will take over, use the personality, and use the body, go and kill, and often then kill themselves.

Audience: [Inaudible]

Instructor: How do we conquer defeatism? To conquer defeatism, we need to cultivate a sense of awareness about the affliction of defeatism. Defeatism is pride. When we feel “I cannot do this spiritual work, my karma is too heavy.” That is an ego of pride who does not want to die. If you are feeling defeatism, it is because your ego senses that you are going to kill it, and so if you listen to that ego, yes you will fall defeated. If you listen to it, you will be hypnotized by it and you will fail; that is your choice. But if you recognize that affliction, and you meditate on the faults of that affliction, you will see firstly that affliction is not you. You are not defeated. You are here and now. You have a physical body; you have a relative degree of health, and you have the teachings. What more do you need? That is why you need to practice from moment to moment, be awake, and be aware. Observe yourself, learn about your behaviors, change, and meditate. Some days we do badly, some days we do better.

Defeatism often arises for two reasons: one is envy. We are comparing ourselves to others. So right there you have another fault to look at; defeatism is one fault, envy the other. How did it arise? We have this idea, “Oh, everyone else is doing better than me.” That is such a lie! It is a lie the ego is telling us.

The other reason is simply a lack of comprehension about karma, the teaching, about oneself, and about the Absolute, the Emptiness. If you really study this teaching and put it into practice, defeatism will fall flat. If you really understand cause and effect, you will know —fully, deeply — that you can become liberated from suffering. Cause and effect ensure it. It only requires the proper causes to produce the effect you want.

Audience: Are there specific practices to deal with the level of hungry ghosts?

Instructor: I will answer that in relation to ourselves because we all have very strong egos related to the hungry ghosts. Hungry ghosts represent, symbolically, our egos of addiction. Egos that we all have that are ravenously consumed by desire. In classical Buddhism, the hungry ghost is represented as a being who is insatiably hungry or thirsty but has a very small mouth, so they are constantly running around to find food or water to satisfy their desire, but when they take that desire, it hurts them, even more than the craving. It burns them like fire. So they suffer with the longing, and they suffer with trying to feed the longing, and then they try to avoid that food or water, but they need it again. This is symbolic of addiction. Every single intellectual animal on this planet suffers from addiction, but each of us in our own ways, and most of us are not even aware of it.

Just as an incidental note, let me point out that even the materialistic psychologists of this era have statistically shown that around forty percent of adults suffer from obsessive compulsive behavior, which is a form of addiction. That is according to superficial methods of the materialistic psychologists, who know nothing about what we are teaching, and have no way to accurately survey the submerged levels of the mind of humanity. I would say that estimate is quite conservative.

When you observe humanity, you see that addiction is very widespread, and I am not talking about alcohol or drugs. The most profound addiction that we suffer from in this era is sex. We are profoundly addicted to the sensations of sexuality, and we are profoundly confused. People think that the physical indulgence is what they want, yet it is not. They want the emotional connection, but they cannot find it. What people really want is the emotional connection, love, but they have confused that with sexual sensations. People are constantly seeking the physical sensation because they do not realize it is the emotional sensation that they want. All of us simply want love. That is a spontaneous, natural part of any living thing, to want love and to love, but we have become so corrupted by lust that we have confused that in thinking that it is about the physicality, and people needlessly pursue lust.

So, how do we deal with the hungry ghost in us? The answer is probably obvious to most of you: meditate. Comprehension is the only antidote. We need comprehension of the elements in us that are endlessly, insatiably hungry, thirsty, craving. We have to apply what we have talked about in the lecture today. We have to meditate. We have to see what causes the addictions to arise, and see their faults. We need to comprehend them; we need to understand them.

The main thing is to learn how to not repress nor indulge, but to comprehend. In other words, if your repressing something, you are avoiding seeing it. If you indulge in something, you are avoiding seeing it. You have to do neither. When something emerges in you, you have to look at it. Where did it come from? How does it come up? What supports it? What created it? What does it want? What nourishes it? What feeds it? Where does it go? Where does it lead? What will it take away from me?

You see, as we explained in many other lectures, the alcoholic knows alcohol is bad, but they do not have comprehension of it because they continue to drink. The person who comprehends the destructive nature of alcohol will never touch another drop. They may feel the craving, but they will not touch it,

because they have comprehended it, and when their comprehension is full and complete, they will not even be tempted, ever. They would just as soon drink sewer water than alcohol. That is comprehension, and we need that with everything: with lust, pride, gluttony, greed, all of those elements that we are insatiably hungry for.

Audience: [Inaudible]

Speaker That's a good question. Should we observe or look at our sexual relationships as spiritual only because pleasure inevitably leads to pain? The nature of the Tao path which is, in its full and complete development, the [bodhisattva](#) path, is a path that we do not become distracted by gain or loss, pleasure or pain; instead, we stay in the middle. The way the Gnostic should observe and relate to their sexual life is the same way they should observe and relate to eating a meal, drinking a glass of water, taking a walk. This means to not make such a big deal out of it. Do what needs to be done; be awake, and be aware. Perform the action that needs to be performed.

Oftentimes we fail to fully understand our sexuality and our different experiences of sexuality because our psychological relationship with it is so flawed. If we could learn to experience our sexual life in the same way we experience every other part of our life, we would be a lot more healthy, but people in this era made a big deal out of sex and turned it into something that it is not. We have turned it into entertainment. Sex is not for entertainment. Neither is violence. But, since we are worse than animals, we see our desires as entertainment.

So, should we look at sex as if it's just spiritual and forget about the pleasurable part? No, because that is repression and that is not the way. Sexuality is what it is. Do you experience pleasure in the sexual act? Ok. Do not become identified. Experience it, but be awake. It is also pleasurable to eat, to drink something we like, to smell fresh fruit, to feel a cool breeze. In every case, the experience is lovely, but is not lasting. We should neither indulge nor avoid them, but comprehend them for what they are: fleeting sensations. We should comprehend what is really happening there, rather than being fascinated by the sensations.

This should be the same way when you experience pain. Do not become identified. You experience pain? Ok, it is pain, it will not last. Just like the pleasure, pain sustains briefly, yet inevitably it passes away.

The reason we suffer is because we have attachment and avoidance, craving and aversion. If we are indifferent in the sense that we allow either side to move, we do not engage the wheel to spin more. This is "letting things be," psychologically speaking. People in the West think "letting things be" is a kind of laziness or indifference. It is not. It is a type of awareness in the sense that we allow either side to emerge and we are simply cognizant and conscious of that. We do not engage the wheel to spin, to move. This is why in Asian philosophy there is so much focus upon letting things be. People in the West want to change perception through mental adjustment, and this is the fault. Mental adjustments are pointless. You cannot change reality by changing how your mind interprets it. The reality is what it is. We have to see it for what it is.

If you want to be liberated from suffering, you have to see reality for what it is. This includes sexuality; see it for what it is. When you engage in the sexual act, be awake, be aware. If you observe animalism in your behavior, observe it. Sometimes you need to stop that. If you see harmful action, stop. "Letting be" does not mean that you allow yourself to commit a crime or harm others. It does not mean that you allow harmful actions to keep going. We are talking about how you perceive.

Audience: Yeshua said to take the plank out of our own eye before we take the mote dust out of another's eye. Could you explain this?

Instructor: Yes, the Master Jesus in his explanation of taking out the plank from your eye before you take the dust mote out of the eye of another person is exactly what we are teaching. Our concern is about others, so the teaching of the [bodhisattva](#) path, which is what Jesus taught, is fundamentally concerned with all beings, not just yourself. This teaching about talking about taking the plank out is focused on the people who were always focused on the fault of other people, and it was used to remind them that our own faults are worse. So, what you need to take away from that is this. In order to be able to help other people, we have to see ourselves very clearly, and see others very clearly, then we can help them. As we are now, we are just creating problems.

Audience: Why do some say that you have to make an [ego](#) fat, and you cannot kill the [ego](#) because it was given to us by the Creator. and the only way we can kill it is to fully experience it.

Instructor: Yes, this is a common teaching. This is a very common teaching because it is a teaching of [demons](#). It is a demonic teaching. When we look at the nature of what we mean by the term [ego](#), it is a Latin term that means "I". That "I" that we experience is false; it is a creation of desire. Our divinity

did not make the “I,” we did. So when eliminating the [ego](#), we are talking about eliminating the false self.

In the bible, the “I” is symbolized by Cain, who because of envy killed his brother Abel, a symbol of the [Consciousness](#). We need to restore Abel. We need to eliminate Cain to enter back into Eden. So this teaching about “living with the [ego](#)” and “fattening the [ego](#),” yes, you can follow that if you want to be a demon and live in the infernal worlds as a demon with a lot of power. They can definitely teach you to do that. There is no question about it. But, I recommend against it. The problem with that teaching is that it completely ignores cause and effect. The Bible teaches very clearly:

“Be not deceived; [God](#) is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” - Galatians 6

If you analyze your [ego](#) you will see that it sows pain. It sows discord, greed, gluttony, lust, avarice, anger. That is the [ego](#). If you feed it and nourish it, and allow it to continue, you will create suffering, and you will bear the compensation for that. That is why the [demons](#) suffer in hell. So, make a choice; you can. You can fatten the [ego](#), and that is called the path of those that fail.

Yet, if your goal is to unite with the divine, the [ego](#) must be eliminated. Look here to see where the divine dwells:

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'” - Isa 57:15

Audience: Is the need to escape cyclical existence universal or personal?

Instructor: When we look at the cosmogenesis as it is presented by the teachings, whether in the east or west, we understand that nature is put in motion because of cause and effect, and by extension, our experience of that is created by cause and effect. Every single one of us is experiencing the effects of our previous actions. If we want liberation, whether individually or universally, it is the same. We have to change our actions and produce new causes in order to produce new effects. So, in that context, the law is universal; it applies to everything that exists. So if any being from any world wants to become liberated, the path is the same. It is through performing superior forms of action. Now, as individuals, will our actions be different? Of course. Our karma is our own, specific to our own action. It is not like anyone else's. Our path will be different from everyone else, because our past actions have been different. That means, in order for us to change and come out of liberation, our actions will not be like any others. Nevertheless, the law is the same for both.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the impure, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

“But his delight is in the law of יהוה; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

“The impure are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

“Therefore the impure shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

“For יהוה knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the impure shall perish.” - Psalms 1

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Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course Service and Sacrifice

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Today we will continue describing the fundamental importance of one of the most important symbols of Asian mysticism, which is called the bhavachakra.



The bhavachakra is symbolized as a great wheel that has six regions. Most people call it “the wheel of samsara” or “the wheel of suffering.” But as we explained in these recent classes, the name bhavachakra actually means “the wheel of becoming,” and that difference is really significant. It represents how forces work in nature, specifically in relationship with our [Consciousness](#)—that is, the very essence of our being, how we experience existence.

Our experience of existence is determined by ourselves, by our own actions, how we behave not only physically, but especially psychologically. That behavior as a [Consciousness](#), as a being, is what determines our experience of existence. What this reveals to us is very profound. It reveals that the way most people understand the wheel of life is wrong, because most people assume that karma is a fixed destiny and that suffering is the rule and is inescapable, and this is wrong. People assume that life is just happenstance, random, painful, and that the only way to find happiness is to accumulate as many pleasant sensations as possible, as quickly as possible, before we die. This way of thinking and behaving is also wrong.

What the bhavachakra reveals to us is that our experience of existence can be changed. It can be changed simply by modifying how we behave now, physically and psychologically. Those changes in our behavior determine our next experiences, and this is very easy for us to confirm. So today we are going to explain how specifically we can acquire the changes that we want.

We start this type of lecture with a certain assumption, and I will state it explicitly just to make it clear, so that we are all in the same page. The assumption is that you are listening to this type of information and studying this type of material because you want to escape suffering. You are tired of suffering.

You want to know something about reality, about the truth, about heaven, about [God](#), about divinity, whatever terms you want to use. The root attraction or draw of spirituality and religion is that longing, the urgency in ones heart to be happy, genuinely happy, and to know something about reality and the meaning of life. So I state that explicitly because, even though most listeners and students of this tradition have that longing, we all have it in different degrees, and that distinction needs to be clear in our own mind for ourselves: how strong that longing is, especially in relationship with our other longings, because the contradiction between them is the origin of much of our suffering. We have different competing longings and desires, and the conflict between them is the origin of a lot of our pain. So, studying this type of material hopefully begins to reveal to us the distinction, and then it is up to us to empower one side or the other, but to do it consciously.

Three Factors

In this tradition we point out three factors. These three factors exist in every religion and every philosophy that emerged out of the divine, and I explain it that way because there are many so-called religions and philosophies that did not come from the divine. We need to understand that, too. These three factors are universal in all genuine mystical traditions, in all genuine mystical philosophies that can actually lead us to experience reality.

The three factors are characterized as death, birth, and sacrifice. We have many lectures and books about these three factors. The three factors are very deep, very comprehensive. These three simple terms explain everything about religion, and for us to make our own spiritual practice effective, we need to make sure that in our daily observation and effort to know ourselves we confirm that these three are in activity, that we are actually implementing them, that we are living by them:

- Death
- Birth
- Sacrifice

We talk about death in the sense of the death of our defects, the death of our impurities, the death of the causes of suffering – all of those parts of ourselves that need to be eliminated. So, for that to happen we need to know about them, we need to see them, we need to observe them, and study them, get to know them.

The second factor is birth, and that is the emergence of new life in us. The birth of the soul, the birth of wisdom, the birth of the [bodhisattva](#) or a Buddha or a master or a pure elemental, whatever level we will reach is that birth of the newness of our life.

The third is sacrifice. We explain sacrifice generally to mean charity, to serve others, to help humanity, to give up our own interests and desires and longings in order to serve and aid others, to put others before ourselves, to emulate the great masters who did not seek to feed themselves, their desires, their name, their reputation, but only to serve others. So, that is a simple, quick explanation of what those three factors are. They are present in every genuine teaching. Jesus taught them in Matthew 16:24 in a very simple way that is very easy to misunderstand and take for granted. He stated,

“If any will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

Now, of course, most people who study Christianity or the teachings of Jesus read that and take it very superficially, and think it means that they have to just say some words and study the Bible, and that is more or less all they have to do, but that is not what Jesus said at all. In fact, that statement contains all three factors:

“*Let him deny himself*” is death. To deny oneself is to deny the false self. To deny ones lust, pride, anger, envy, gluttony, greed, laziness, etc. All of the many defects that we have that are characterized in the Christian tradition as Satan – our own [ego](#), in other words.

“*To take up his cross*” is birth. The cross represents how forces in nature engage to create life. The cross represents masculine crossed with feminine to create life. It is a symbol of [Alchemy](#) or [Tantra](#). So, that “*take up his cross*” does not mean to make a cross in your garage and carry it, or to hang a cross on your wall, etc. It is something psychological, spiritual, and energetic in ourselves.

Sacrifice is “*and follow me*”, to emulate the example that Jesus provided in his life, which is to serve others with humility but, primarily and most importantly, with love. This is the greatest teaching that Jesus gave: his example.

These three factors are taught in all Gnostic schools, they are taught in all the genuine religions in different ways. In Buddhism, we find it hidden in a variety of ways. The synthesis of Buddhism is often repeated in many traditions as:

“Commit not a single unwholesome action, cultivate a wealth of virtue, tame this mind of ours; this is the teaching of all the buddhas.”

So the three factors are hidden there in a Buddhist presentation.

More specifically, we find them in the three grounds that lead to liberation from suffering. In Buddhism these are:

- bhavana
- dana
- sila

Bhavana means “cultivation of mind.” Now I put this word “mind” in quotes because Asians know that this word “mind” does not mean intellect, but the Westerners do not realize that. So, Westerners read “cultivation of mind” and they assume it means the cultivation of that “me, myself” that is always talking in your head. It does not mean that. That “me, myself” that is always talking in our head is the [ego](#), because that “me, myself” is all of our desires and longings and fears; it is also our personality. It is all of our subjective elements. It is not the Being. It is not divinity. So, instead of “mind”, we should say [Consciousness](#), because really in the Buddhist tradition, there are different words used for mind, but they all point towards mind-heart, which in English is more accurately “[Consciousness](#).” It is not referring to the mind-heart we have here. It is referring to something much more abstract: the ground [Consciousness](#) or the fundamental root of what we call Being.

Bhavana or cultivation relates specifically to knowing how to pay attention, to be here and now, to be present, to meditate, to have insight into reality, to awaken. To arrive at that awakening is only possible when the elements that produce sleep and discord are removed. So, in synthesis, bhavana is death, the factor of death. The cultivation of awareness of [Consciousness](#) of mind arises spontaneously when we remove the causes of suffering of our sleep, when we remove the defects. In Tibetan Buddhism, that cultivation of mind is called Lojong, which means “mind training.” It is primarily about removing afflictions from the mindstream.

The second of the three grounds is called dana, and that simply means “generosity,” giving, service, or sacrifice, in other words.

The final is sila: a virtue, morality, purity, and that is obviously birth, the birth of the new way of being.

So, the three factors are hidden in the Buddhist tradition behind Sanskrit and Pali words, but they are the same three factors. What is interesting when you study these different religions, when you apply these different religions, you find that everybody interprets them differently, and that everybody applies them according to their own level and their own understanding. The problem is that because our mind is not tame and because we have such a strong conflict in us between all the different longings, we generally lose sight of these fundamentals, and we generally modify our understanding in order to give ourselves room to continue being the way we have always been. In other words, people apply these techniques only up to a certain limit. They apply them within their comfort zone, but not beyond that. This is natural and normal, but unfortunately is the cause of a lot of problems in spiritual movements. So, in other words, we find spiritual movements where these teachings are presented and everyone talks in a beautiful way about the three factors, about the death of desire, or death of [ego](#), about the birth of virtue, or the natural mind, about service for humanity and sacrifice for others. But at the same time we find that these people are ruled by their pride, are motivated by envy, are enslaved by their lust. This proves without any doubt that those teachings, those factors, are not being applied. Maybe in a little, small shallow way to some insignificant things, but not to the primary causes of the problems. You see, if there are problems in the temple, in a group, in a movement, in a school, it is because the members are not living by these factors. It is simple: the causes of discord are inside of us, not outside. If we find discord outside of us—conflicts, fighting, gossip, scandalous situations—it is because the causes are inside of us, and they are not being changed. It is important for us to be very sincere about our analysis of these factors because in order for us to advance, they need to be put into play in a balanced way.

Death obviously refers to working on ones egos, to analyzing our defects, to trying to change. Birth comes naturally from that if one is applying the teachings in the right way: transmuting energy, saving

energy not wasting energy, working with the practices in a healthy upright way. So, regarding birth and death, people can generally grasp some degree of their meaning.

It is interesting to instructors that most students who learn about the three factors rarely ask questions about birth and death. It is interesting. Most people do not ask much about death. Maybe it is because most people do not want to die, psychologically speaking. And also, most do not ask much about birth. The real questions that always come up are: What about service? What about sacrifice? How do I help others? This is the part that people get stuck on. So, that is today's lecture, is going to be about that. What is it to serve, to sacrifice? But in order to understand that, you need to first have in mind the first two factors: death and birth.

To explain sacrifice, first I want to talk about some of these terms so that we can be clear on the meaning and the roots of the words.

Service

Service in English is rooted in French and some older terms that are previous to that, including Latin.

SERVICE: c.1100, "celebration of public worship," from Old French *servise*, from Latin *servitium* "slavery, servitude," from *servus* "slave"

Sanskrit: **सेवा Seva**, used in Karma [Yoga](#). "service, devotion, worship, reverence, sexual intercourse" Service actually means "a celebration of a public worship." The original usage in English comes from that. So that is why we could go to a religious service, like Mass, or a group prayer. But the root of that in Latin comes from servitude or slavery, which is a very strange relationship. In Sanskrit, we find another interesting correlation. The word for service in Sanskrit is *seva*, which to my mind, looks very much like service, very similar. In fact, a lot of the English, French, and Latin terms can be traced back to Sanskrit, so there may be a relationship that the etymologists do not know about these days. The word *seva*, which is used in Karma [Yoga](#), means service and devotion, it means worship and reverence, but it can also mean sexual relations. It is a very interesting fact that very few people know even though it is in the dictionary.

If you study Hinduism or any form of traditional [Yoga](#), not the modern exercises that people call [Yoga](#), but actual [Yoga](#), the words *seva* is very important. If you attend any Hindu temple or Hindu tradition, all students, all devotees are expected to perform *seva*. So, if you stay at a temple or you visit a temple or you go visit a teacher, it is a normal process for you to contribute *seva* according to your abilities. It may be to sweep, to wash dishes, to cook food, to help the elderly, to help clean the place; to perform service as a servant, with humility. To put yourself to work in order to keep that temple functional. This is a normal part of Hinduism and Buddhism. In the West, we do not have that.

Westerners expect other people to do all that stuff. Westerners just want to come in, take whatever they can take, and get out before the offering bowl comes around. But in the East, it is not like that. In the East, it is well understood that when you are receiving a teaching, you need to give something back, you need to do your part: it is reciprocal. This is the most basic, foundational, kindergarten level of service, of sacrifice. It is to contribute to the source of your spiritual nourishment. Whoever is nourishing you spiritually, you should return the favor. That is the most basic level of sacrifice: to help your church, to contribute to your temple, to your teacher, whatever that place happens to be: a church, a temple, a synagogue, a mosque. That basic practice is considered as fundamental for beginners, and in the East it is assumed that everyone will do it. No one says anything, no one asks you, you just show up, and you do it. If you see something that need to be done, you do it, you do not have to ask. In the West, it is different. They have to make lists and charts, and constantly remind people, sending emails, making phone calls, begging for support. If you did not do your service today they get after you about it because people in the West have a different mentality.

Many people think of the factor of sacrifice as being some form of service. First, let us compare the definitions of service and sacrifice.

Sacrifice

SACRIFICE: From Old French *sacrifise* (12c.), from Latin *sacrificium*, from *sacrificus* "performing priestly functions of sacrifices," from *sacra* "sacred rites" (properly neuter plural of *sacer* "sacred") + root of *facere* "to do, perform"

Hebrew : **zabach** nm. "sacrifice, offering; feast; slaughter." v. "to sacrifice, slaughter; slay, kill"

Sacrifice is different from service. Again, we looked the English word, which comes from French and Latin, and it again relates to religious functions. Service relates to religious services, but sacrifice comes from priestly functions. So where service is related to activities of the congregation, sacrifice is more in relation to the priests. It is a different level. The word really comes from "sacred rites," which

you can see here in the etymology I have given you. If you compare that with the [Hebrew](#) , you find that this word sacrifice is even more compelling, because it can mean not only religious functions, but it can also mean slaughter. It can mean to kill.

The Three are One

Now, if you back away from these terms a little bit and you remember the factors, it all makes sense. Birth, death, and sacrifice are three factors. You cannot separate them and effect anything beneficial. To really put these three factors in motion in your life, you need to learn to see them as one thing – three sides of one thing, which is simply to be consciously active. Birth, death and sacrifice are just three faces of one action. When you really study birth, death, and sacrifice in your own efforts to awaken and change, you will discover that it is true. You cannot have a birth without a death, and you cannot have a death without a sacrifice. It is self-evident, and that is the meaning of the scriptures, and we find that throughout the scriptures. In the Bible, for example, we find many examples of sacrifices. These sacrifices are symbolic. Some of them are actually black magic, because the Bible has been modified. But the genuine sacrifices, such as, for example, when the angel commands Isaac to be sacrificed – that is a symbol, it represents something in relation with our soul. That sacrifice represents how we must sacrifice ourselves, and in that sacrifice of ourselves, we have to die. How can you have a sacrifice without death? The emergence after that death will be a birth of something new. So you see those three factors are one, not separate. You cannot teach them separately, you cannot practice them separately. You cannot only talk about death. What would be the point of only talking about death if you do not talk about what is born anew as a result of that? Death, itself, is a sacrifice that leads to a new birth, so you always have to talk about all three.

Traditional Sacrifice

Traditionally, we find sacrifice very mystically presented in religion, but because our minds have degenerated so much, we have completely misinterpreted it. Nowadays, we look back at our ancients and think that they were terrible, awful. We condemn them and think we are much better than the ancient ones. We think this way because we misread our own traditions. We misunderstand our own scriptures; we do not realize that our mythologies are mythology. Stories that teach something true, but that are not literal.



For example, in the Bible we have the story of Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve. Everybody nowadays thinks that they were actual people, that there was a Cain and there was an Abel, and that Cain killed Abel, and somehow all of humanity came after that. But they are not literal people, they are symbols of the soul and the mind in us. What is interesting in the story of Cain and Abel is that both of them are making sacrifices to divinity. Cain who is called a hunter has his sacrifice. He sacrifices what he gathers from nature. But Abel sacrifices his most precious lamb that he raised, that he loved, that he cared for, and that is what he gave and [God](#) appreciated that more. That is why Cain became jealous and killed Abel: envy because of Abel's sacrifice, but people read that and think that it is literal and that Abel actually killed a lamb. Why does [God](#) need us to kill a lamb? [God](#) is [God](#), and if [God](#) needs a lamb, he can kill it himself. He does not need a person to kill a lamb, what does killing a lamb prove? It does not prove anything. We kill to eat, anyway. How is killing to eat and killing to give to [God](#) any different? Why does [God](#) need someone to kill an animal? It makes no sense, unless you think about it as a myth, and you think about it as symbolic, and then it makes sense. A lamb represents Christ, the lamb of [God](#). Christ is the son of [God](#), the light that emerges out of the Absolute. It is the fire that gives life to all things. Abel is the soul who is giving his very life for others. He is emulating Christ, sacrificing himself, but Abel doing that does not make sense to Cain, who is the mind, the [ego](#), who sees that and becomes jealous, envious, angry, proud. That is what the story means; that is easy to see. That is the conflict that is in us.

So, when we take that understanding and look at the other traditions we find the same thing. We see how all these other traditions lost sight of the meanings of sacrifice. The very ancient Americans in the beginning sacrificed properly, but as their traditions degenerated they began to sacrifice living things, including people. That is a grave crime: to kill, for what? Likewise, amongst other traditions, such as amongst the Greeks, we find symbolized many traditions of killing animals to give to the gods. People nowadays do not understand that it is symbolic, that the animals represent animalistic elements in our mind: it is our animal lust, our animal anger, our animal envy that we have to sacrifice, that we have to put into the fire, the Christic fire, to burn up, to return those elements back to [God](#). That is the most beautiful sacrifice, but the Greeks gradually forgot those things and were misguided, misled, and led into committing black magic. That is why in the Bible we find some examples of black magic – sacrificing animals, sacrificing things that will do not mean anything to us, but we are doing it to get power or to get favors. That is the nature of black magic. So, we need to be clear about this. Sacrifice exists in white, pure traditions, and also in the black ones.

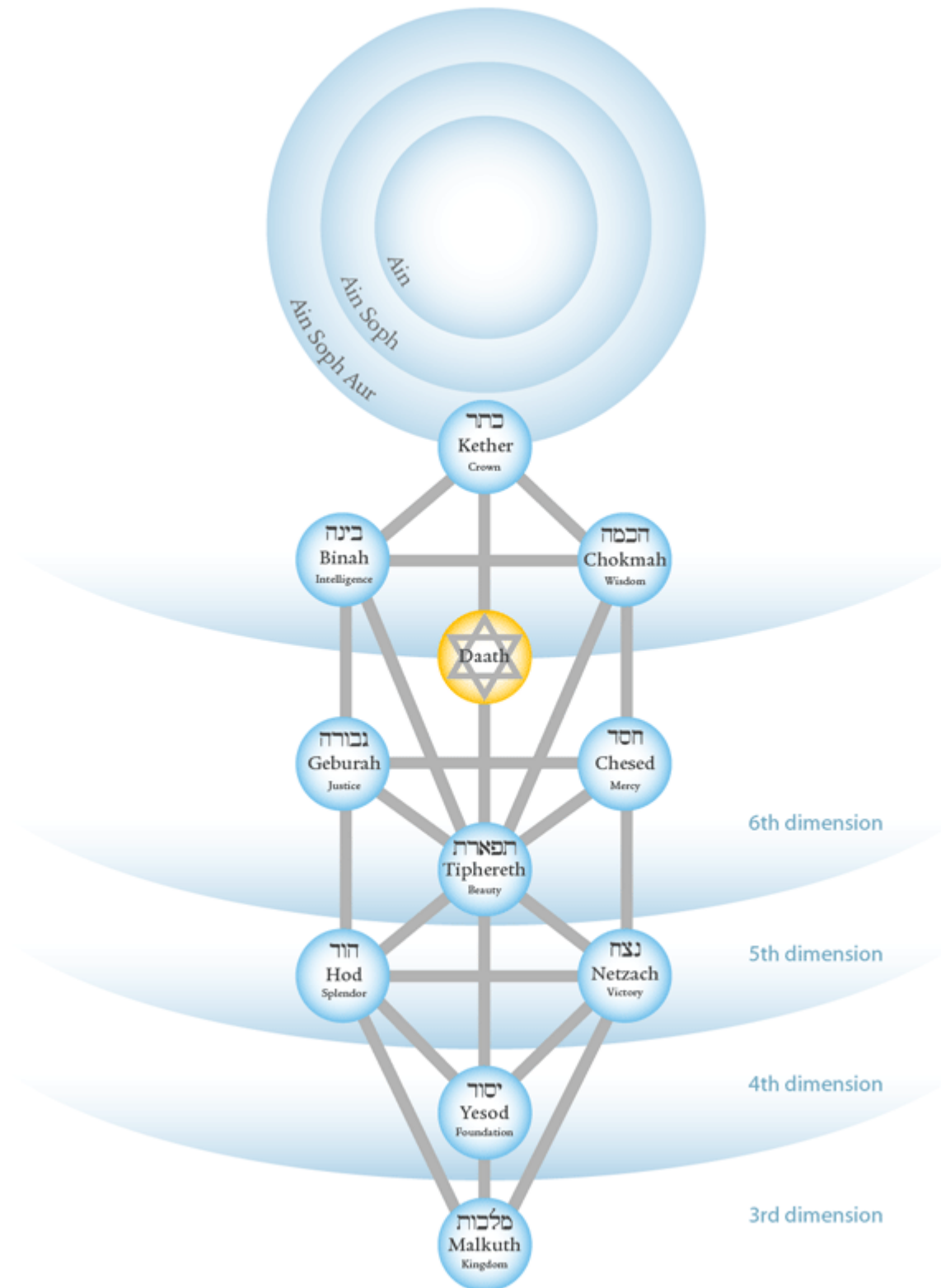
To understand this better, let us read this quote from Bodhisattvacharyavatara, which is also called “the [bodhisattva](#)'s Way of Life” by Shantideva. It is the most important scripture of Mahayana Buddhism. This is one of my favorite quotes, that says:

“All whosoever who are happy in the world
 Are (so) through the wish for the happiness of others;
 While all whosoever who are miserable in the world
 Are (so) through the wish for the happiness of themselves.
 But what need is there to elaborate more?
 Just look at the difference between the two:
 An infantile person acting for his own self-aims
 And the Sage (Buddha) acting for the aims of others.”

This short passage illustrates the distinction that needs to be clear when we observe our own behaviors. When we want to understand sacrifice and what it means, this quote elaborates what it means.

Let me talk briefly about that first part of the quote because I know the way it is translated here is a little hard to grasp. What it is basically saying is, all the happiness in the world came about from serving others, from doing for others, and all the misery and unhappiness in the world came about from serving oneself. If you really observe your own experience of life, you can see the truth of it. Those people who are concerned about themselves, focused on themselves, do not produce happiness for anyone else, and they certainly do not produce any happiness for themselves, because as much as they tried to feed their desire, the desire only grows. It is never satisfied. Yet, those who are truly made happy are made happy when someone helps them. Is it not true? So, that quote is illustrating something significant about the nature of generosity or giving, the nature of sacrifice.

To understand that better, we can look at the [Tree of Life](#). The [Tree of Life](#), which is a symbol that most people associate with [Kabbalah](#), is actually present in all religions, and illustrates for us the structure of existence. We see in this graphic what at first glance can appear quite complicated, but if you study it you will find that it is actually quite simple and very intuitive.



This structure illustrates how nature functions in a process of laws, from the most rarefied, pure regions of existence down to the most dense. There is a stratification of many levels. So at the top of this graphic we see the Absolute. It is the uncreated, the unmanifested pure potentiality without any differentiation. No measure, no weight, no space, no time. Something, but that is not yet. When the Absolute manifests into existence, it manifests as a light. Every tradition has symbols of that light, we call it Christ, which is from Greek *Christos*, which esoterically means “fire, light.” But that fire is not physical fire or literal fire, it means the fire that is burning in every atom, the fire of existence, a living thing, it is something alive. That first emergence is characterized in different religions as a Trinity, as a three in one. So Christianity represents it as the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In Hinduism it is represented as Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. In Buddhism, it is the Trikaya: Dharmakaya, Nirmanakaya, and Sambhogakaya. That three in one simply represents how that one light first manifests and contains in itself the archetypes of everything – the archetypes, the

blueprints, the potential. So let us understand that. In synthesis, this is a light fire, an intelligence, that is one thing, but is three things. We call it also the three forces. So Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva are the first logos, second logos, and third logos. These are the forces that create, three forces to create anything.

That is reflected here physically. To create here physically always takes three forces. So what is our greatest creative power? To create life, and to create life you need three factors, three forces: a man, a woman, and sex. Those are the three forces.

What is curious about that is that we find this structure of three repeated down this [Tree of Life](#). We have an upper Trinity, we have a middle Trinity, we have a lower Trinity, and then we have a single sphere by itself. Then, the whole thing is reflected inverted at the bottom. Three Trinities, and then one by itself. So, there we have ten spheres.

The tenth one is our physicality, it is the physical world, it is our physical body. It is where we are here and now. This realm, which can be called the Kingdom, is the condensation, the accumulation of the stratified levels above it on this graphic. So everything that descended from above is made concrete here, meaning that this world is a reflection of all those laws above us. We can find them here and work with them here if we are smart, if we are intelligent, if we know how.

The law of three is an example of that. We can create life, but there is only one way to do it. All the scientists think they are going find another way, but they cannot. As close as they get, all they are doing is playing with matter when they are trying to create a living thing in a laboratory, they cannot do it. The only way you can create a living thing is by a sexual combination: masculine, feminine, and the sexual force that unites them.

Three forces create. Three forces also destroy. So, when all those forces and energies which descend down this ray of creation, they create all the worlds above us, all the heavens, finally condensing here physically. They are flowing through us, through our [three brains](#), through our three nervous systems, right now, all the time.

Every energy, every quanta of energy we use contains the atomic power of those three forces, and you know what happens when you split an atom – there is a lot of energy there. That energy is moving through us now, through our intellect, through our heart, through our body. How do we use it? Not only individually, but collectively? The state of our planet reveals how we are using it. We are not using those three forces in ourselves to create life, we are using them to destroy life. Sure, lots of people are having sex and having babies, but those babies are growing up to create atomic weapons, chemical weapons, pornography, crime, subterfuge. Where do we see true creativity that reflects the spirit, the Being, Christ? We do not. Behind every so-called “good creation” made by this humanity is pride, lust, envy, greed...

So, in synthesis, we can say that the three forces (+ - =) create through the three factors.

The three forces create life through:

1. Death
2. Birth
3. Sacrifice

Energy is flowing through us every day, every moment; how we are using it? We convert that energy through our actions (mentally, emotionally, physically: three forces). The problem is that we do not analyze how we do it. We do not have any wisdom to use it well. We do not have the skill to use it well. We do not have the training, we do not have the understanding to see how our actions affect everyone else. We have a myopic conscious blindness. We think that we exist in a little bubble, and that our thoughts and our feelings are our own, and that whenever we think and feel and do only affects us, and that we are isolated and alone. We are wrong on all counts, dead wrong. We are not isolated in any fashion, not at all – not physically, not emotionally, not intellectually, not spiritually. There is absolutely zero isolation among us. The sensation of isolation is an illusion that is self-propagated. It is a lie, an illusion produced by the [ego](#). Because we think and feel that we are in our own little shell and can do our own little thing, we indulge in crime, psychologically, spiritually, even physically, and think it will not affect anyone. Everything we think, feel and do, has a tremendous impact not only on us, but on everything else.

The Commandment says “Thou shall not kill”, and we think it means physically. It does not. It means emotionally, it means spiritually, it means psychologically. When you speak badly against a person, when you criticize a person, you kill their image. When you tell your friend, “You know what that guy did, he did this and that, can you believe it?” And the other person is in a shock and says “I can't believe it! I thought he was so nice, he was terrible.” In that person's mind, their image of them has been killed. They will never trust that person again, their heart is closed. That is murder,

psychologically, and what if it is happening on a greater scale? What if what we are saying is a lie? What if it is not true? It is worse. What if we say untrue things about something who is totally undeserving? What if we in such an action interfere with a good work that person is doing for humanity? What if we spread lies about a spiritual teacher or guide, thereby interfering with their mission to aid others? The karma for us is truly heavy.

So if this is true, all the sins and defects, envy, fear, pride, lust, gluttony, greed, all of them, are constantly in motion in our psychological mind stream. We are converting those forces and energies that are flowing into us, those forces and energies are dying, sacrificed through our action in giving birth to pain, to defects, to suffering. So everybody says where does suffering come from? Why did [God](#) create suffering? [God](#) did not make it. We did. [God](#) gave us free will. The universe is simply there. It is a set of forces and laws and energies that we can use according to our will. What is our will? Clearly it is evil. It is impure, it is polluted, and we use our energy to create pain. So, we can change that. If we are sincere, we can change it. Let us see what the scripture say. There is scripture that says:

“Action does indeed bind the Self
except when done as sacrifice;
So action must be consecrated,
offered to Deity high above.
“When beings came from Creator
He ordained all to sacrifice;
By sacrifice are worlds sustained
And by it everyone does live.”

Let us talk about what this means. *“Action does indeed bind the Self except when done as sacrifice.”* Anyone here know how to say action in Sanskrit? Karma. The word karma literally just means “an act.” But we interpret and understand it to mean “action and consequence.” Now, in the West, karma is completely misunderstood, and people think karma just means punishment, but it does not mean that. It means action and consequence, whether good or bad. What this passage is stating is that action binds the self, except when it is done as a sacrifice. So if we want to be free from bondage, we need to know what is a sacrifice.

Remember the word sacrifice can mean a priestly function, and it can also mean an act of killing. So it says *“So that action must be consecrated, offered to Deity high above.”* So, the answer is there. If we perform our actions in remembrance of [God](#), in remembrance of the divine, and in remembrance of that Being, that is, cognizant, aware, performing the action with wisdom, then the consequences of the action do not bind one to the wheel of becoming.

You see, all the beings in existence are bound to existence because of their actions, because their actions were not done as sacrifice. Their actions were done for self. If we learn to perform our actions not just physically, but emotionally, mentally, consciously, always cognizant of others, then we can unbind ourselves. This is the meaning.

When we learn to turn our action—physical, emotional, mental, conscious—away from self-love, self-obsession, and instead we love others, we love our neighbor as ourself, instead of loving ourselves first, then we turn the wheel of becoming towards the favor of everyone.

The second part says, *“When beings came from Creator he ordained all to sacrifice. By sacrifice are worlds sustained and by it everyone does live.”* This is also a very powerful statement that is completely misunderstood in modern times. *“By sacrifice are worlds sustained and by it everyone does live.”* This does not mean that if we start sacrificing animals to the gods that we will sustain life; it does not mean that, but some have interpreted it that way. Or if we do sacrifices of butter or lamps, or sacrifices in the temple or doing rituals that that will sustain life. It does not mean that.

“By sacrifice our worlds sustained” refers to how that light emerges out of the Absolute, because that emergence is a sacrifice. That light is called Christ. When that light emerges and begins to create, it creates through its own sacrifice. It gives itself so that others may live. In each birth, something dies. In each death, something is born. In each birth, in each death, there is a sacrifice of life. That life is the root force, it is Christ itself.

When you eat something, you kill something, and the death of that thing gives you life. It is sacrificed so that you live. Every time you breathe, you kill the chemicals and gases that you breathe in. Those elements of nature, which have life in their level, die. They are sacrificed on the cross of existence so that you may live. All the clothes that you are wearing were made through the sacrifice of someone’s time and energy who may have suffered terribly to make them, but we are completely ignorant of it. We have no idea of the sacrifices made for us so that we can enjoy this very moment! We do not grow our own food, we do not raise our own food, we do not kill our own meat. Somebody does it for us,

and we take it all for granted, and we keep living without any cognizance that every step of the way there is sacrifice for there to be birth, there is death for there to be birth. That is what this means, and it is especially true spiritually.

Studying all this would be very interesting if it were just taken that materialistically, but that is not why we are here. We want to change. We want to experience the reality. We want to overcome suffering.

This image of Christ crucified represents the three factors perfected, completely perfected. It is unfortunate now that this image of the Christ crucified carries so much psychological baggage, so much spiritual baggage that we can no longer see the image for what it actually represents. Now we look at it and we think of the atrocities that were committed by the churches, and we think of the fanatics who blindly follow dogmatic interpretations of the teachings of Jesus without any comprehension of their meaning. So we see this image and it conjures up negative emotions in many people, and that is really unfortunate, because the image of Christ on the cross is a beautiful representation of the function of nature of the highest levels. It is a beautiful representation of what we must perform if we wish to reach those levels spiritually.



This image shows Yeshua the savior giving his last breath, his last drop of blood so that others may live. That is the nature of a [bodhisattva](#). The [bodhisattva](#), which we explained in the previous two lectures, never seeks to serve him or herself, but lives and dies for everyone else. We have many beautiful examples of that type of psychology, in Jesus (Aberamentho), Moshe (Moses), Milerepa, Buddha, Joan of Arc. Many examples, beautiful teachers who lived that.

So in this particular image we see above the cross that cryptic mantra INRI, which superficially is translated to mean “Yeshua, the king of Jews.” But really, those three letters hide many things.

Specific to this lecture, it hides four Latin words:

Ignis naturae reneatur integra

that means “the fire renews nature incessantly.” But how does it do it?

Well, let us look at nature. Become a scientist and imagine nature, the whole planet. Imagine the planet is in your laboratory. You are a scientist in a spaceship and you have the whole planet there in your hologram deck or whatever those things are called, and you are able to turn and look at it and see all the living things on this planet. Look at it scientifically and see how life is sustained on this world. It is very simple, and very profound. It is sustained through death, through birth, and through sacrifice. This truth is inescapable, and yet all of the foolish intellectual animals, which is us, think that we do not need to listen to that, that we can circumvent death, we can avoid death, we do not have to deal with death, we can extend our lives indefinitely, we can put our brains into machines. People are literally

trying to do that. You would be surprised how much money is being spent right now to try to prolong the existence of our putrid minds. We think that we can overcome nature's process of birth and create life in a laboratory. We think that sacrifice is just a theory. We foolishly think about life in a completely wrong way.

Spiritually speaking, in order to reach the highest levels, we have to come into balance with nature. We have to learn about nature and work in harmony with nature. We cannot change the laws of nature, but we can ascend beyond them. In this level, birth, death, and sacrifice are the law. So, we have to learn to work with that, and learn to work in harmony, especially spiritually.

So, the fire renews nature incessantly. What is the fire? We are not talking about physical fire. We are talking about the Christ, the light, the Ain Soph, that Ain Soph Aur that emerges out of the Absolute and produces that first Trinity – that is the fire. And that fire descends through all the stratifications of nature all the way down to this level where we are, even though we think we are in the greatest place in the universe, it actually very low, very dense. But this world is a reflection of that ray, and everything that has existence has that fire inside of it, it is a Christic fire, it is the force of life, force of Being. That is the fire that constantly renews nature, and how does it do it? Through those three forces.

Everything dies, there is no exception. I apologize if you did not realize it, but it is true. We will die, that is unavoidable, but what is modifiable is what that death will create. Death is not an end of something, it is a beginning of something. When we die something will be born, but that depends on the type of death (study our [course on Death](#)). So physically that is true but especially spiritually that is true. Will our death emulate this example of Jesus and be a sacrifice?

What about today? In each moment we are dying, and in each moment we are being born. You need to eat and drink and sleep because your body is dying and being born at the same time. So on the cross of your body, you are sacrificing energy constantly in order to be born anew each day. You are creating new cells, rejuvenating organs, growing, just physically.

What about psychologically? What about spiritually? The fire flows into us. It is sacrificed on the cross of our [three brains](#). It dies in order for the sparks of cognizance to flow through us. That is what we call awareness, perception, feelings, thoughts, sensations. Those do not just happen. They are the firing, the explosions of energy being sacrificed in creating those sensations, those thoughts, those feelings. Birth, death, and sacrifice. Every thought is the death of energy and the creation of energy, a sacrifice. Every emotion. When you feel that anger blossom in your heart, you get really mad, there is sacrifice. Something dies, something is born. There is a sacrifice there. There is an action. Then you have to ask yourself: In this INRI, in this fire that is renewing my nature, what am I creating? What am I destroying? Am I helping myself or helping others? Am I following the example of the great teachers or am following the example of Satan who serves only himself?

That scripture continues,

“Things exist through all other things,
all things are knit with all others,
so that the being of a thing
is contribution by others.

“No one exists independently
as all are, also all others,
thus existence of anything
is sacrifice by other things.”

This is worthy of [Meditation](#), a lot of [Meditation](#). Even though this is not a Buddhist scripture, this illustrates the core principle of Buddhism, which is interdependence. It is the core principle of the bhavachakra. It is what is represented in the twelve nidanas around the bhavachakra. It is dependent origination. It is pratityasamutpada, interdependence.

“*Things exist through all other things, all things are knit with all others, so that the being of a thing is contribution by others.*” We all have this illusion that we are isolated and exist in a bubble. It is a lie. Absolutely every particle that you experience as yourself you got from somebody else. Can you deny it? You got your body from your parents. You got your personality from your parents, siblings, friends, schoolmates, teachers, culture, religion, city, state, country. You did not invent any of that, and yet you clutch onto it as if it was “your self.” But all of it was given to you by someone else. None of it is genuine, not of it is real, none of it is lasting. It is all impermanent, it will all die.

“*No one exists independently as all are, also all others, thus existence of anything is sacrifice by other things.*” Physically speaking, we are all here because our parents gave birth to us, and our parents were here because their parents gave birth to them, and that is the process of birth, death, and sacrifice from

generation to generation. It is undeniable. But it is deeper than that. Merely on the physical level, the literal level, we do not understand this at all, because we persist in the illusion that we are in an isolated bubble, and that we are alone and that everything we do is just about us, and we do not affect anyone and no one affects us. It is all an illusion. None of our thoughts are original, none of our feelings are original, unique. That feeling of a sense of self, of me, is no different than the pride of any other person. Your anger, your resentment, is no different than anyone else's. It is not special. Moreover, everything that you have and everything that you experience as yourself at this level depends entirely on everything else. It is not independent. Nothing about us is independent. Nothing about us exists independently. We exist in this level because of a very delicate balance of very subtle things. If we modified our atmosphere by the smallest fraction, there would be no life on this planet. If we modify the position of the planet in space by a fraction, there would be no life here. Everything is so delicate, just balanced, just so. But we take it for granted.

What about our own life, just physically? A little tiny microbe can kill us. One little microbe. What kind of power do we have then? What kind of independent existence do we have when all around us are the constant threats to end that existence as we know it? One distracted moment is enough for us to be killed. To step in front of a car, to touch a live wire and be shocked, to drink poison, to do something foolish and die, especially when you are driving a car. One flash of not paying attention and you are dead. There are many cases like that. So where is our independent existence? We are very dependent on many things. I mentioned our food and water. If there were not many people elsewhere growing food and raising food, we would not be able to survive.

We are dependent on so many things, but most importantly is to analyze this spiritually. Spiritually speaking, this is especially true. This bubble that we believe we exist in is a complete illusion, and it is easy to see past it if we simply make the attempt. Have you not noticed that you can, for example, step into an elevator and there are other people, but you can sense when somebody behind you is really angry or upset? You do not even have to see them, but you can feel it. Or if you go into any place, you can sense someone's emotion when it's strong? Is it not true? Or, for example, you can be walking along and you suddenly turn to look and someone's looking at you. You sensed it, you did not see it, but you felt it. How is that? How is that we sense one another's feelings and thoughts even though we are not paying attention to it? It is because they affect us. We do affect each other, we are just not aware of it. The surprising truth is, when you actually begin to awaken [Consciousness](#) and to pay attention, you realize this humanity is a collective mind.

Everyone thinks that they are an individual, but there are no individuals here. We are all part of one cloth trapped in the illusion that we are separate, but we are not. We are like particles of water in a wave in the ocean, each drop thinking, "I am just a drop and I am just flowing along here", not realizing that we are just part of the wave swept along with no control, no awareness. To become an individual is something unique. It requires cognizance. It requires the death of the impurity and the birth of the soul. That is only acquired through sacrifice. The sacrifice of the old, the sacrifice of the impure, the sacrifice of the illusion. That is the nature of the work. This passage is pointing out how the Christ flows through nature, and it summarizes in saying,

"All is, then, sacrifice alone,
As **Yajna** known, the holy deed
One does belongs wholly
To everyone and everything."

This passage summarizes the previous ones that I have read to you, and just to give you a synthesis, because I know everyone had already forgot what I read, what this is stating is, if you perform your actions for the benefit of others, in remembrance of divinity, and with cognizance and love, any action becomes sacrifice. It becomes consecrated, it becomes holy, it becomes a pure act. In other words, it becomes a reflection of Christ in the world. It is Christified, consecrated. Therefore, it deserves the term **Yajna**.

Yajna यज्ञ: Sacrifice

Yajna यज्ञ is Sanskrit and means "sacrifice." Nowadays, the term is interpreted to literally mean priestly functions in the temple where ordained priests offer elements to a fire, and they chant mantras and they put in butter and other substances into a fire. That is what people understand now as Yajna. It is just like in every religion where it has been reduced down to the most literal, physical interpretation, but that is not why this is written. Those traditions are beautiful and we respect them, but the meaning

of the term applies to our action in every moment. It refers to how every action that we perform is conditioned, that is actions of body, of heart, of mind.

So the scripture is stating all existing things were put into existence for sacrifice in order to produce existence. The one who comprehends that and acts in remembrance of that performs a holy action. In other words, stated simply: do goodness. Be kind. Comprehend your effects on others, and act as though everything that you interact with is Christ. That is how you consecrate your behavior.

These quotes are from the Bhagavad-gita, which means “the song of Lord”, and it is an excerpt from a much larger epic poem in Sanskrit called the Mahabharata, which means “the great warrior”.

The word yajna is really important. Translated literally it means “sacrifice,” but it could also mean “fire, worship, offering, praise, prayer, devotion.” In the Vedic traditions, there is an entire science of sacrifice, of rituals. It is now all literal and physical, that is not what we are referring to in these lectures. What we need in these moments is a profound psychological spiritual sacrifice in ourselves.

The term यज्ञ yajna is composed of very interesting parts. The first syllable य ya means “light, wind, carriage, mover, or joiner.” Everyone knows the terms Mahayana, Tantrayana, Sutrayana. That ya means “vehicle, that which brings together.” It is the thing that carries us from one place to another. Now compare that with [Hebrew](#) . We all studied [Hebrew](#) , we all know what ya (*Jah, Ia, Yah*) means. Ya is a name for divinity. Io, Io-Peter, Jupiter, ya, or ja, Hallelujah. That [Iod Hei](#), that ya, is the same. It is the light of Christ. It is that first emergence. Ya. It is the fire. Is that not beautiful? Hidden in the word “sacrifice” is the light, the fire of divinity.

So, the second part ज्ञ jna means “[Consciousness](#), knowledge, understanding, knowing, wise, having a soul.” It literally means the “thinking soul”. It means the planet Mars. It can also mean the planet Mercury. I find this fascinating that these specific elements are all implied by that letter.

Now, this word यज्ञ yajna is written with two letters: य ya and ज्ञ jna. All of those meanings are hidden in that short phrase. It is very beautiful.

So let us synthesize what this means. If we learn to harness our jna, our [Consciousness](#), here and now, if we learn to be awake, and if we learn to act learning from our masters, our teachers, to love others, to have more concern for others than for ourselves, to measure our every thought and feeling and action against that, to say, “Am I really doing best for myself or for others? Am I serving my pride or am I serving what is better for the group? What is better for the community? Am I chasing my lust or am I killing my desires in order to be a better representation of the light?” We need to always have that process in play in us, that is to make our jna active. That becomes a sacrifice. Does it not? Is it not a sacrifice to deny oneself as Jesus taught? To deny oneself, to say to one's own desire, “no, because to serve my own desire creates suffering for me and everyone else.” When we do that, when we perform that sacrifice, we bring the presence of that divinity. We become more aware of others. That is an act of love, and when there is an act of love, how does that happen? It is not in a bubble, it is not in isolation, it is the very fire of Christ that is emerging in that moment, in all the related atoms, in all of the particles, in everything. When you sincerely do a kind act for someone, when you give up yourself, and you sacrifice for someone, you feel different. And the other person will feel it, and the environment can become charged. That is not an illusion. That is not invented. It is not made up. That is the fire of Christ in that environment that charges all the particles in that environment. When you go to a place where that type of action has been performed consistently, that environment is different. It is charged. That is why in certain places you can feel the presence of something different, you can sense it with your heart. That is a literal actual thing that happens. It is because the jna, the [Consciousness](#), has been activated for sacrifice of the ya, the light, the wind, joins. It creates. There is birth of beauty, of love.

The Paramitas: Perfections

So, what is really profound about this for me is that it relates to another important word, प्रज्ञ prajna. If you studied Buddhism or Hinduism, this word will be familiar to you, especially in Buddhism. *Prajna* means wisdom. It is also the highest of the six paramitas. It means intelligence, wisdom, or awareness, and of its components, the ज्ञ jna is the same as yajna, but that first letter प्र pra means “before.” So, *prajna*, wisdom, is referring to that which is “before [Consciousness](#),” that which is “before knowledge,” that which is “before the soul.” What is before knowledge? It is Christ, itself. So what we need to see, then, is how the paramitas work. I told you in the beginning that one of the three grounds is *dana*, generosity. It is also the first of the paramitas taught in Buddhism. Paramita

literally translated means a “perfection,” like a jewel or a gem, but the meaning is an attribute of [Consciousness](#).

1. *Dana*, the first paramita, is generosity.
2. The second is *sila*, which is ethics.
3. The third is *kshanti*, patience.
4. The fourth is *virya*, energy or diligence.
5. The fifth is *dhyana*, which is concentration or [Meditation](#).
6. The sixth and final is *prajna*, wisdom.

Many people read this and think that they need to work on each one of these individually and try to develop these characteristics. That is not how you approach this. The paramitas are simple to understand, but very profound to actually experience. The paramitas are attributes of conscious action. They are not something that you can acquire and put in your pocket. They are not medals or awards or achievements. They are qualities of a soul. They are qualities of action.

The way it works is quite simple. The very first paramita is one of the three grounds of Buddhism, it is one of the most important things that Buddhists learn, it is *dana*, generosity. It begins with service, helping in the temple, helping the monks and nuns, donating to the temple, supporting its activities, going and helping the poor, needy, etc., those types of actions. That is a type of generosity; that is a kind of service. It is not sacrifice; it is service. It is good. It is needed, but it is not sacrifice yet. By doing service (*dana*), by learning to act on behalf of others, if you do it in a cognizant way, you start to learn about ethics (*sila*, the second paramita). Because then you learn, “Wow, if I do this good thing, if I really help this person, it makes us both happy... not only that, when I really help someone else, I put them in a position so they can help others too.” So it becomes exponential. The more we help others, the more they can help others, and it spreads. That is the basis of ethics where you start to learn if I do something selfish for myself, I am taking from others, I am restricting others, I am making other suffer so that I suffer, in turn. So generosity and ethics are totally intertwined.

When you start acting with ethics (2), serving others, you realize that to do that effectively you need a lot of patience (3) because to serve others is not easy. People are not gracious, they do not have gratitude, and to perform service for others, to serve especially when it is not wanted or not recognized and you do not get praise and you do not get recognized for that, it is difficult. Oftentimes, real sacrifice is rejected by humanity, criticized, attacked. To keep sacrificing in such conditions requires patience. To continue doing it takes patience, it takes serenity. To serve without expectation. To do it because it is right, and thus by doing that you are developing diligence (4, *virya*), right? To keep doing what you know is right even though you are not necessarily seeing the fruits. You are being patient about it, you are doing it because it is right to serve others. So you are developing diligence, the energy to keep doing it. Naturally, because you are making that effort (4), you are developing concentration (5, *dhyana*), the ability to keep focused on that one thing, to keep moving and keep moving. That, in and of itself, starts to open up how all this works together and that gives you *prajna* (6), insight, wisdom, understanding, compassion. That brings it back around to the beginning (1, generosity), that is how these paramitas work. They are all one thing, just like the three factors. This is just a more deep and more specific way of expressing the same teaching.

Our True Nature: Selfless Love

Now, what I was pointing out to you about *yanja* and *prajna* is that if you are able to perform every action in this way, when you go to your job and you have to deal with your co-workers, your customers, the people you work for, the people you work with, the public, your boss, and you go home and you have to deal with your family, and you go on the bus or the train and you have to deal with the public, if you can perform all those actions in a heightened state of the welfare of others, you are performing sacrifice. In a very beginning way, particularly if you are doing it with love, not just because I told you so or because you feel bad and you feel like you need to do something good or else you will get in trouble. That is not why. You do it because you sincerely see that people are suffering, and you want to help them. That is what empowers it: love. It is when that type of love that you feel when you see someone who is sick or suffering in pain, you forget yourself, do you not? When you see someone sick or suffering in pain, you are not thinking, “Oh, I really have to go the grocery store, and here is this person bleeding all over the floor. What am I going to do now?” You do not think that. You forget the grocery store and you leap to help. Is it not true? If you see someone in danger, someone suffering in pain that you can actually do something for, you do it. This is a natural spontaneous reflection of our true nature: altruism, love. We all have it, but we have lost touch with it.

That simple quality, if we pay attention to it, if we remain aware of it, it can grow. That is the seed of the [bodhisattva](#). That is what the [bodhisattva](#) emerges out of. That selfless love for others. To be of that type of service, not just physically, but spiritually.

Now, in order to do that, in order to enter into the [bodhisattva](#) path, properly speaking as we explained previously, you have to reach a certain level. We are all beginners, so we are aspiring to that. To really help people spiritually, you need to have something to offer. It is very beautiful to provide the teaching and help people and guide people. In fact, that is the highest form of generosity, yet one has to earn that level.

Types of Generosity

There are three types of generosity: the first is to give the teachings, to provide the dharma to humanity. I think that many students when they read that, or a study that and hear about sacrifice, many get immediately intimidated and think, “Oh no, I have to go teach and be in front of a crowd!” No, it does not mean that. We are not all destined to be teachers. We each have our own vocation. We each have our inner being who has a skill, a mission, a gift that can reflect through us to help others. We each have our own. You will not find it by imitating anyone else. You will find it by being true to your Being, and allowing your Being to guide you. Thus, you can perform this type of generosity. Each of us can give the teachings that liberate the [Consciousness](#), but give them in accordance with the idiosyncrasy of your Being, your own skill, the skill of your Being. It might be teaching, it might be something else, it might be to support your tradition, or to be a cook, or a gardener, or a secretary. Humanity needs all of our skills. If we use the skill of our Being, we can render great service to others.

An example comes in my mind of several people from the tradition of a Buddhist group, and this group of people decided one day that they were at an age in their lives, a time in their lives when they had already raised their families, and they had already developed a place in the world, had a steady lifestyle, and they wanted to really do something good for humanity. So, this group of people said, “Okay, let us all collectively get together, live in one place, keep our full-time jobs, and turn all of our income over to the dharma.” This is a handful of people, three or four, but they all had jobs that they took their entirety of their incomes and gave it to the teaching. This service made an incredible impact in their whole region, because they were able to open a big temple and host all kinds of events and bring teachers from all over. They made a big impact in that region because they had the ability and were also willing to make the sacrifice. That is an example. They were not destined to be teachers, but they were in a position where they could help their teachers.

In other examples, to give the teachings, you may put out fliers. You may be in a position where you can write something, you can make art, you can make music, you can talk to your friends, you can give books away, you can just be an example. There are many ways to fulfill this type of generosity to give the teachings, to help the teachings. Everyone has to find their relationship with that, but that is the highest form of generosity, or *dana*: to give the teachings to others.

The next form of generosity is to give fearlessness or protection. That is in every possible way. So, for example, if someone is in danger of being killed but you remove them from that danger, you perform a great act of generosity. You have preserved their life, but that is also true spiritually, it is also true emotionally. To give someone protection or a sense of safety or security is a big act of generosity. Parents do this for their kids, or they should. They should provide an environment for their children in which the children have no fear, in which they are able to grow and fully flower. Some parents do not do that, and some parents created an atmosphere of threat where the children feel constantly threatened. It is also true in schools. For example, in many spiritual groups, the entire environment is filled with fear, that if you do not do this and that, “you are going to go to hell.” So, that group, even though they think they are spiritual, are not, because they are not providing a sense of protection and fearlessness to their students, much less giving the teaching. They are controlling or manipulating students through fear. Schools who say, “We are the only true school” are creating a fear-based environment, because the students are afraid that the light of the dharma is not available anywhere else (which is absurd, by the way; Christ is far more loving than that. The light of Christ is not restricted to one group). Instructors should always provide students with a sense of fearlessness. Students need a safe, loving environment in which to grow. So, the second type of generosity is to provide fearlessness, to provide a sense of being protected and safety.

The third and lowest type of generosity is to give material things. Unfortunately, this is all most people think about in regards to generosity.

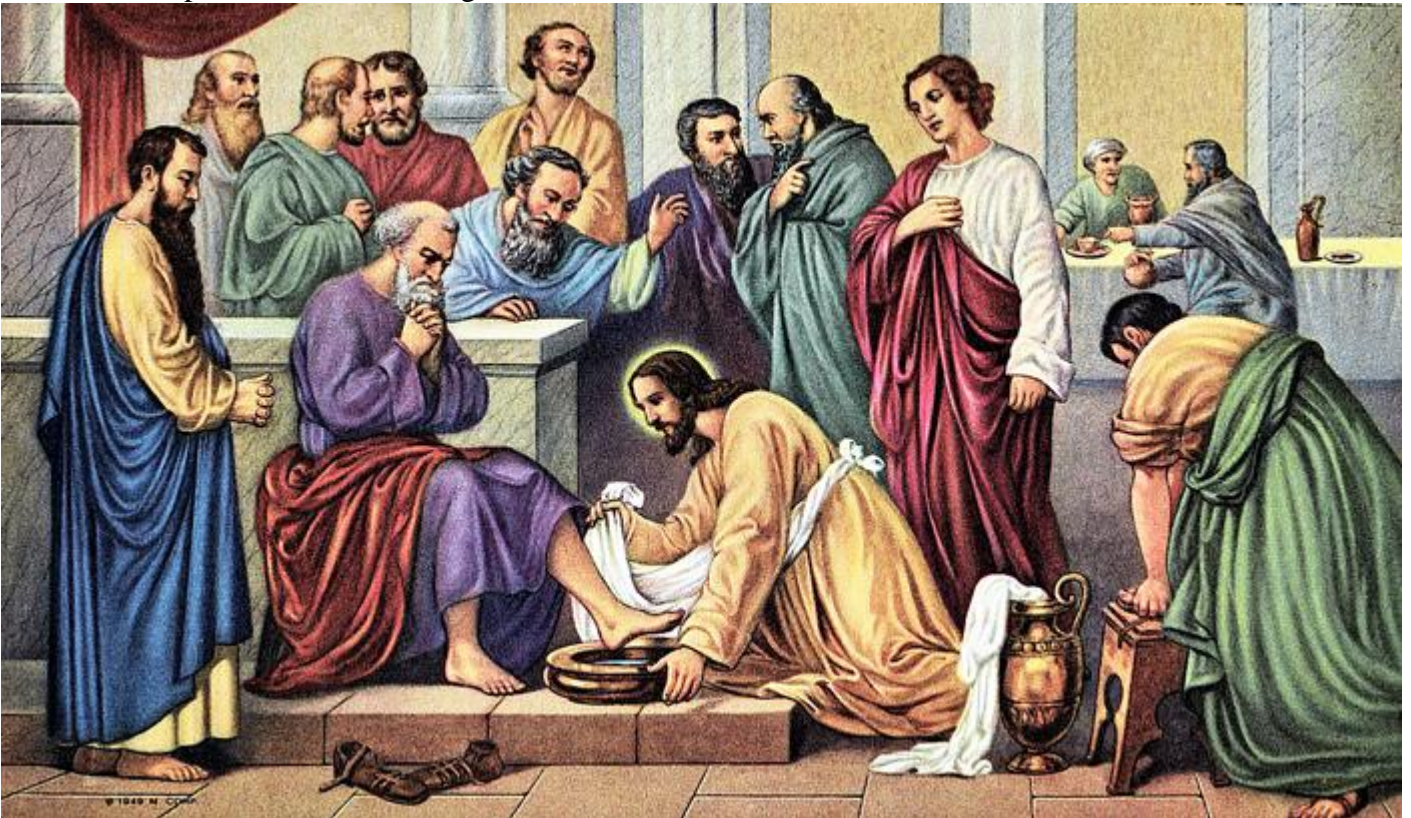
These are three types of service, not sacrifice. Let us make that clear. They are types of generosity, ways to help people. They are not sacrifice. Yet, they can become sacrifice.

So, just because you teach Buddhism, Christianity, or [Gnosis](#), that does not mean you are sacrificing for humanity, especially if your pride is being fed or if you are infecting all of your students with all your negativity, like fear, pride, lust, your envy, your fear. If you are infecting your students with that, you are not performing a sacrifice, simple as that. For that to become a sacrifice, for any these to become a sacrifice, you have to give up your own self. That means that death and birth have to be in play in you. For that to be a sacrifice all three factors have to be a play. If in your giving of the teachings, you are dying, that is your [ego](#), your pride, your envy, is dying, then yes, that can become a sacrifice, and the birth from that is the birth of the students, the growth of the students. Those three factors have to be at play. So then, that becomes a *yajna*, a sacrifice, and that is true for any these. If in giving material things, in giving fearlessness, we are dying psychologically, that becomes a ritual sacrifice of ourselves on behalf of others. That is what carries us up to the paramitas, so that that *yajna* becomes *prajna*. When our [Consciousness](#), the *jna*, is carried by the *ya*, the light, the wind, the vehicle, through all the paramitas in our actions, to wisdom, *prajna*. The *prajna* is Christ, itself. That is why the Bhavad-gita says:

“The world is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of sacrifice; do thou, therefore, O son of Kunti, perform action for the sake (for sacrifice) alone, free from attachment!”

In other words, the Gita, itself, in its entirety, is saying simply this: act on behalf of divinity, do not expect anything in return, and then you will be performing the sacrifice and be carried up to the divine.

We see that expressed in the teaching of Jesus.



Jesus in this painting is the lowest. He has lowered himself to washing the dirty feet of his disciples. They did not wear sneakers. They were barefoot in the dirty streets with manure and all that in the roads. So, he is washing the filthiness from them, their psychological filthiness, and humbling himself to do it, and not asking for anything, not asking for attention, for thanks, for money. Nothing. He is only giving what they need. Just giving and giving and giving. That is the example that one has to emulate in order for your *yajna*, your sacrifice, to become *prajna*, which is wisdom.

Questions & Answers

Audience: Some of the ancient people, if they were in a highly spiritual state, they would give themselves physically to be sacrificed by a priest and then that kind of got corrupted, was that, in and of itself, black magic? In other words, if you are in agreement with giving your body to allow the blood to run in a temple, is that also black magic?

Instructor: There are cases in different traditions in which initiates willingly died to preserve life for others. Jesus is an example of that – willingly died. There are others. The Buddha gave several

examples of previous existences is in which he died to preserve life. He is not the only initiate to do so. So, there are cases, and yes that has been misinterpreted by certain groups and propagated a lot of misunderstandings and black magic, black practices, black rituals.

Audience: Also you can see the whole thing is like an outcome of the process where the cosmic Christ sacrifices itself, and in our manure is where the work takes place. So it is like a reflection, and you have to do what Christ does in order to sacrifice yourself the way he sacrificed to create this physical [*unintelligible*].

Instructor: That is exactly right. We have to sacrifice our will and desire, following the example of Christ, and the guidance of Christ which comes inside of us, not from outside. The only way you can access that is by awakening. So, that points for me something that I neglected to say. That is simply this: many students have this concept that in order for us to effectively sacrifice, we have to abide by certain sorts of restrictions or rules. The only rule that you have to follow is the guidance of your Innermost. So, for example, many people think that in order for them to be able to teach spirituality they have to have the approval of someone else. This is not true. The only approval you need is from your Innermost, but then that begs the question: do you have the ability to get it? Do you have the capacity to get permission or guidance from your Innermost, and if you do not, then you certainly have no place to be teaching yet. That answers your question, right? So those who have that longing to teach or that urgency to teach, good. Work towards it, earn it. Listen to your heart, to the guidance that you get through your dreams, visions, practices, and if that is your path, your Being will put you in it, it will be unavoidable. That is my case. For example, I do not like being in front of a crowd, but I have to do it. For me, it is a sacrifice. I do not enjoy it. I do not like attention, but I do it because that is what I am supposed to do. I have to. If it were up to me, I would be not here. I would be alone somewhere else. So, part of what I am pointing out there is that for each person to find their sacrifice, their way of helping, it will be a very odd mixture for you. According to my experience, it will be a sacrifice for you. It will not be easy. It will cost you, but it will prove fruitful for others. That is one way you measure if it is genuine. Are others benefiting from your action? Truly benefiting? Getting the teaching, growing as a soul as a [Consciousness](#), becoming better people – that is a good measure of it. The other measure is: Are you dying? Is your [ego](#) dying? So that is why you have to always have those three factors in your awareness.

Audience: Does sacrifice have to be painful in order to be sacrifice?

Instructor: The greatest ones are painful. Sacrifice is a mixture of pleasure and pain. The reason I say it that way is this way: In any genuine sacrifice, the [ego](#) dies. That is painful, but in a genuine sacrifice, the [Consciousness](#) is being born and that is beautiful. So it is a mixture.

Audience: I am thinking of sacrifice from a vocational perspective. There is a lot anyone of us can do in order to inspire others to be fearless – to protect them in a third world country, or we could work for a non-profit organization. These are very basic examples of the ways in which we can spend our time on the behalf of others. But, on the other hand, there are things that we all love to do, things that inspire us and, in which, the largest percentage of what we feel is our Being is engaged and involved. There are many of us who feel that we are called to be artists, but we could be doing other things which is more sacrificial, more dedicated to humanity.

Instructor: That is the conflict between the different parts of our psyche. We have many parts in our psyche, and we are in a great disarrangement. If you are really dedicated to achieving liberation from suffering in helping others to achieve that, then along that process you will find you the vocation of your Being. That is the mission, the work that your Being can do through you, and that will be something very beautiful, very enjoyable, but also painful because in order for to do it, all the other parts of you that are opposed to that have to die. So, it may be to do writing or music or teaching or developing any other avenue of life according to your idiosyncrasy, but that is according to your Being, not your personality, not your [ego](#) necessarily. So your vocation may be something you have no idea about. It could also be something that you already know how to do. That is a conflict or an equation that each person has to solve for themselves. The only way to achieve it is to put these factors in motion today. Work on achieving the three factors, putting them in motion. The egos that you can recognize, the defects you can recognize, work on killing them. The virtues, work on giving birth to them, and work on learning what it means to sacrifice for others – to put the importance, the health, the benefit, the protection, the safety and security of others before yourself. All of this implies something really significant. It implies taking advantage of what you have and putting it to work. For example, you stated a great example that many people say, “Well, if I sacrificed for humanity, maybe I should move to Africa and go live with the natives.” It does not mean that. Your Being did not put you in Africa, he put you where you live now. That means you need the work there. Work where you are with

what you have, and transform it for the greater good. If you already have an education and a job, use it. Take advantage of it. If you are in a relationship or a marriage, take advantage of it. Transform it into something beneficial for others. Do not seek something different. We are put in this situation by karma, by our own actions. The only way to change it is not to move somewhere else because if you go somewhere else you are going to take all of that same baggage with you, it will just change faces. It will be the same problems. If you really want a change, change where you are with what you have. Work with what you have. Take advantage of it. Use it.

Audience: How can we encourage students to sacrifice?

Instructor: I suppose you can do that by being a good example. And I suppose you can do that by pointing out where there are needs. It seems to me that most people, even though we all suffer with the [ego](#), most of us really want to do good. We really sincerely want to make the world a better place even if we have wrong ideas about how to do it, and I think for instructors and guides of any level, the way to help students is to help them to see the truth using the teaching and pointing out the places where there are suffering, and thereby we can offer each other inspiration. That would be my suggestion.

Audience: I died a little during this lecture. How can we keep that going?

Instructor: This is precisely the problem in the beginning is that we do not have continuity. It is very difficult for the beginning student to develop continuity. It takes a lot of willpower, a lot of effort, and discipline. So, it is simply that: Be aware of what you feel and be aware of its value to you, and then later when you forget it, remember it and go back to studying again. This is simply the process. It is a process of remembering and forgetting until little by little you do not forget anymore. It is not easy, but it is the only way. There is no artificial way to achieve that. It has to be natural, intuitive. So, study and practice.

Audience: How did Jesus encourage us to sacrifice?

Instructor: It seems to me he did it primarily through his example. If you study the Gospels, you will see the symbolic interpretation of his life there, and everything he did was for someone else. If you study the scripture, you will find that in all of those books there is not a single thing he did for himself. Does that not say something? How many of us can say that about our own lives? It seems to me that all of us were created from the same basic elements that Jesus was made from, and therefore we have the same potential. For us to realize that potential is a matter of us wanting to do it. So, if we can take what we have, analyze it thoroughly, throw out what is useless and harmful, and encourage and empower what is beneficial, we can render great change, not only for ourselves, but the people around us. One person can change the course of life on a planet. It has been done before and it will be done again. Anyone of us can do that. It is simply a question of having the will to sacrifice enough to achieve it. That is the only limitation. We are the only limitation: ourselves.

Audience: How can I be helpful to humanity?

Instructor: Kill your [ego](#). Learn about when in you causes suffering and stop letting it cause suffering. For all the beginners, that is the way we begin. I know that we all have these beautiful ideals about becoming great masters and leading the population into the Absolute. That is a beautiful movie or story. But the reality is that nothing of that can be achieved as long as we have the [ego](#). So, we start with our sacrifice here and now, today, by sacrificing our [ego](#), and giving birth to virtue in our hearts and minds.

Audience: Talking about fear, Shantideva said, "When a swordsman drops a sword, his first fright is to pick up the sword again. When a meditator forgets himself, the first fright is to remember the spheres of hell and to be mindful of the self again."

Instructor: Absolutely. So, fear in spirituality has to be looked at very carefully. So, you are pointing out the example of how Shantideva talks about fear as a way of putting yourself back into the proper perspective of remembering the nature of the path. This is important, but we have to understand the difference between that fear when you suddenly realize that you are on the edge of a cliff and you can fall over the edge. That is one kind of fear, and another kind of fear is when you are down safe in the valley and you are thinking about being on the edge of the cliff and you feel terrified. That is different, is it not? That is the difference. So, that natural aversion to falling off a cliff when you are actually there, that is healthy. That is natural, that is the natural inclination of your preservation of life, and we need that and we need it consciously. We need that conscious impulse to preserve [Consciousness](#) awake and active and aware, present here and now. Without that, we will fall, without a doubt. What we do not need is that animal fear that is constantly afraid of everything, that is different. We all have that.

Audience: I have an anger problem. What form of sacrifice will help me replace my anger with good qualities?

Instructor: Firstly, when any discursive quality is emerging in us, whether it is anger or pride or envy, the most important thing is to be fully aware of it. To not avoid it, to not repress it, but neither to indulge it and let it express through us. We have to really observe this, and this requires a great deal of skill to learn to do this so that when that anger emerges and you feel that impulse to yell and shout, do not yell and shout. You have to restrain those impulses, but not repress them. You want to see in its fullness everything about that anger that you can see – what it wants, what it thinks, what it feels, and at the same time, see how it is affecting others around you. That perception, if you are successfully able to do this even one time, will change your life. It will change your life when you really see that anger fully blossomed in you, and you see its impact on your environment and on the people around you and you see the suffering in yourself and others, when you become cognizant of that, you will recognize what a threat anger is. That is the first part. Become cognizant of it, then and there. Then secondly, meditate. When you have some peace and quiet, when you have some time, sit and remember that event, contemplate it, analyze it, play it in your mind, play it in your imagination, and sink into sleepiness and allow your imagination to flow and allow your Being to show you more. So, pray. That process allows you to stop intellectualizing, to stop reacting, but instead to open up your mind and heart to allow your inner divinity to show you more about it, and then you approach the same way whatever you see, you do not react, you do not indulge or runaway, you observe. That is in simple terms how to do that, and what you will find is where that anger is coming from, what it wants, how it acts, how it manipulates you, what it thinks, what it feels, and that the totality of that information will give you a lot of clues into how you can change your behavior for the better. What you will discover is that that anger has been fooling you for a long time, and has a lot of subtle tricks that it uses to manipulate you and take your energy. So, then it is up to you to change it. Anger is difficult to work on, so is envy, so is lust, so is pride, but we have a great corner man, his name is Jesus. You can call him Yeshua, Buddha, or Christ. You have someone right behind you who will help you, who will help you to overcome Goliath. You see, we are David, the [Consciousness](#): small, weak, no skill, no muscles, and we are looking at Goliath, a giant, and the only thing we have is faith. So, if you have that faith and you work sincerely in this way, you can conquer the giant of anger and the giant of lust, but you can do it because you got someone behind you, which is Christ.

Audience: Why did Jesus wash Peter's feet first?

Instructor: Peter is representation of the sexual energy and sexual teachings. The first place we need to be cleaned and washed is in our sexuality. Peter also relates to our pineal gland, which is in the center of the brain, and this is the place where the forces of divinity guide us and help us. So, for us to be able to perceive the instruction and guidance we need from above, we need to clean and purify and energize our pineal gland.

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Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course

Spiritual Birth

Written by [Gnostic Instructor](#)

Category: [Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming](#)

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This is a transcription of the audio lecture [Bhavachakra 06 Spiritual Birth - AUDIO](#) originally given live on Gnostic Radio, which you can download for free. There is also an accompanying PDF:

[Bhavachakra 06 Spiritual Birth - PDF](#)

We will be continuing our course about the bhavachakra, which is a central symbol in all Asian philosophy, specifically in Buddhism. The bhavachakra course that we have been giving over the last few months has covered the basic meanings and structures of this ancient symbol, and today we are going to be talking about the three factors at the base of all religions and all mystical traditions, three factors that are symbolized in many different ways.



In the Buddhist tradition, the symbol of the bhavachakra (usually incorrectly referred to as the wheel of Samsara) has the root of its name bhava, which comes from the root Sanskrit syllable bhu, which means “to become.” Chakra means “wheel.” So, the bhavachakra is “the Wheel of Becoming.” As we have explained in the previous lectures, it is a wheel that symbolizes cycles in all of nature, and how matter and energy function in nature. This is neither good nor bad. It is simply the coming and going of all things. It is how nature works. So, those who look at this symbol merely as “the wheel of Samsara” or “wheel of suffering” as it is often referred to are only understanding it in a very superficial way. The reality is that the bhavachakra implies a profound understanding of how to reach liberation.

When we long for liberation from suffering, when we long for spiritual enlightenment, self realization, awakening, we are longing “to become,” to experience bhava, something new. Bhava itself means “attitude, status of being,” it can mean a subjective becoming, and it can mean a state of mind. So, all of us right now have a particular bhava. It is our current state. In the Gnostic Tradition, we call that our

level of being. Everyone has their own level of being. Our level of being is not defined by our intentions, or by what we believe in, or how we dress, or how much money we have, or who we know or do not know intellectually. Our level of being is determined precisely by the conditioning of our [Consciousness](#), and that is reflected in our behavior, not only our physical behavior, but the quality of our heart and the quality of our mind. Our own inner bhava is our level of being, and that is what this wheel symbolizes first and foremost: our own state of mind.

Our state of mind, our state of being, is our level of cognizance, of [Consciousness](#), relative to nature and to divinity. That is defined by our behavior, by the state of our thinking, the state of our feeling, and what is spontaneously occurring inside of us psychologically from moment to moment. That is a reflection of our level of being.

We explain it in that way because in this day in age there are many people who believe themselves to be good people, spiritual, many who even claim to be awakened or enlightened, who think they are very serious about their spirituality, and yet their minds rage with envy, anger, pride, lust.

No matter what claims we make about ourselves or what we believe about ourselves, they are irrelevant. The truth of our level of being is in our psyche. It is what emerges in us spontaneously. That is our level of being. If we are sincere with ourselves, truly honest with ourselves, we will see, looking in our minds, that we are not buddhas. We are not masters. We are not angels. We are deeply afflicted with pride, envy, fear, uncertainty, anxiety, doubt, criticism, jealousy, but most especially lust. All of us are deeply afflicted by these poisons, so much so that like fish in water, we do not see what we swim within. Those poisons, being present in our mind stream, reveal the truth about our level of being. We are very low! A buddha, an angel, a master, does not have those qualities. A fully developed angel, master, or buddha—whatever you want to call them—does not have lust, anger, pride, envy, jealousy, fear, uncertainty, or doubt.

This is the measure that we need to apply to ourselves in order to understand truthfully, sincerely, honestly, where we stand in relation with divinity and nature. Without that type of sincerity, we will never be able to change positively for our benefit and the benefit of others. That is why this tool is so critically important.

Three Forces and Three Factors

In all levels of nature, it takes three forces to create. These three forces manifest in each level relative to that level. In the highest, they are:

- First Logos, Affirming Force, Brahma, the Father, the Dharmakaya
- Second Logos, Denying Force, Vishnu, the Son, the Sambogakaya
- Third Logos, Conciliating Force, Shiva, the Holy Spirit, the Nirmanakaya

The conditioning of our psyche modifies these three forces at our level. In other words, we turn our energies towards creating harm towards ourselves and others.

In the center of the wheel are depicted three animals that symbolize three forces that work in nature and in our psyche. They represent ignorance, craving, and aversion. This is how the root dynamic forces that create on every level from above to below become the axis of the wheel of our mind. That union of three things puts energy in motion and that is how the wheel turns in our psyche, because of these forces that are moving inside of us constantly.

There is a way to harness the three forces and direct them towards the benefit of ourselves and others. To do that requires a deep education in the path towards liberation, so that we have an accurate understanding. In synthesis, the path is composed of three factors. We have explained the three factors in many lectures and books; they are:

- birth
- death
- sacrifice

In the previous lecture, we described sacrifice in detail, what sacrifice really means as well as what it does not mean. In this lecture, we are going to talk about birth. (We are saving death for last because nobody likes to talk about that! Really, it is the best part, so we are saving death for the last lecture.)

Birth is not Conceptual

Today, we are going to talk about spiritual birth. To begin that subject, we need to begin to understand something about birth. Birth is not a concept. To have a birth in any level of nature does not happen just because of an intention or because of an idea, or because of a wish. There are many people who want a child, but that wish is not enough. Just the same, there are many people who want to become (bhava) an angel, a buddha, a master, but the wish alone is not enough.

Difficult to obtain is the conception [birth] of a human being,

Difficult is the life of mortals,

Difficult is the hearing of the True Law [dharma],

Difficult is the birth of the Awakened [the buddha]. - Dhammapada 14:182

Birth is a function in nature that happens because of laws, because of how nature works. Spiritual birth is no exception. To be born spiritually does not happen because you read a book. It does not happen because you found a religion or because a teacher taught you something. Every great master taught very clearly that spiritual birth is an exact process, and that there are levels. The knowledge of that process has been protected. It has been hidden, because humanity has been too immature to use it wisely.

In today's lecture, we are going to talk about that hidden teaching, because the time has come for humanity to learn it. It is not easy to hear. It is painful because it contradicts much of what we would like to believe. It contradicts many comforting beliefs and traditions that we have held for hundreds and even thousands of years, because our ideas and our level of being do not correspond to the higher levels of being.

To reach a higher level of being, we have to stop being what we are. To become something new, we have to change. That change begins inside of us, psychologically, spiritually, and even physically.

To reach a higher level of being, we have to abandon everything that relates to our current level of being. To become [bhava] a buddha, we have to adopt the behaviors, thinking, feeling, of a buddha. To stop being an animal, we have to abandon the ways of the animal.

As I explained in the previous lecture, the three factors (birth, death, sacrifice) are completely intertwined as one. They are not separate. We separate them in lectures as a matter of convenience since we are all beginners and it is hard for us to really assimilate this type of knowledge because it is really deep. But the reality is you cannot separate death, birth, or sacrifice and expect to achieve anything.

Remember, the three forces united create change. If you have only two forces, then nothing will result. If you have one force, nothing will result. It takes three to create. That is why at the base of every religion we find a trinity of divine forces. Always, there must be three forces engaged. Thus, this is true psychologically and spiritually, here and now. These three forces are a way of harnessing and directing energy in ourselves psychologically, spiritually, and even physically.

To sacrifice is to give up personal will, self-will, desire, craving, and exchange it for the better good. To sacrifice is to give up something in order to serve others, to serve the betterment of one's self and others. In the process of sacrificing something of value to us, there is a death. An attachment can die, a craving can die, an element in us psychologically can die, like lust, pride, envy, fear. In the process of giving up something of value to us, in order to reach something higher, to perform an act of love or charity, an act of sacrifice, that element dies, and then something new is born, something higher. That is how these three factors intertwine They are one.

Ethics

In the very beginning of every religion, this is learned as ethics. Ethics is the foundation of every true mystical tradition. Ethics are how to do what is good for oneself and others, and how to stop doing what is harmful to oneself and others. So those beginning stages are actions such as to not take intoxicants, to not steal, to not kill, to not lie, and to not misuse sexual energy. Those are the five basic vows that every beginner in Buddhism takes. We find those five reflected in every tradition in the world. In the Yogic traditions, they are in the stages of Raja [Yoga](#) as Yama and Niyama, the beginning levels of Patanjali's [Yoga](#). They are also hidden in the ten commandments, just phrased differently.

When you learn ethics, you learn to sacrifice your desire for the sensation of being drunk so that you do not become afflicted with the addiction to that sensation; and then, being sober, you are better able to perform your responsibilities as a parent, as a husband, a wife, a son, or a daughter. The drunkard, the alcoholic, cannot be relied upon, and only brings strife and pain to a family or workplace. This is simple to understand. It is a sacrifice to renounce the desire, and the death of the addiction gives birth to a person who has more responsibility to themselves and to others. Simple, is it not? So we see three factors entwined one scene.

We find that this is true for every ethic. When you do not lie, sometimes you sacrifice your image.

When you make a mistake and someone catches you, you want to lie out of pride to protect your image, but when you tell the truth, you sacrifice your pride. Is it not true? That pride is dying, and it is painful because then the pride is humiliated because you had made a mistake and done something that

you should not have done, but born from that is something true. It is called ethics. It is called integrity. Honesty. This is true of every ethic.

How Birth is Started

We find in all the ancient religions the teaching about restraining sexual energy, about dealing with it in a very delicate and respectful way. Nowadays, nobody does this. This part of religion has been set aside because we love lustful, animal sexuality too much. We do not want to deal with that part.

If you study religion, you know that the beginners in all religions always had to enter into some form of [Chastity](#) or preservation of sexual energy as they work towards the higher mysteries. Traditionally, in ancient times (for nowadays this knowledge has been forgotten by the mainstream religions) the beginners (monks and nuns) would isolate themselves from the opposite sex to work for a time without the temptation of sexuality, so they could learn to manage their sexual energy.

Then, gradually, once they achieved control of that force, and achieved the awakening of their [Consciousness](#)—that is, they were awakened, not asleep like us, but with a mind that was stable, bright, and clear, and when they meditated, they had clairvoyance, they could investigate things in the internal worlds, both in the body and out of the body. Not like us, who are in spiritual darkness. They had to awaken first. Then, after awakening, those souls would be given the higher mysteries, and taught how to engage in sexual activity in order to reach the next level. So, there are three levels of spiritual work:

1. Beginners: avoid sexual contact, prepare for it.
2. Sexual cooperation, but with control over the energy. I.e. not releasing it.
3. Sexual renunciation. After the sexual works are concluded, the initiate no longer needs sex, so is capable of proceeding without it.

Unfortunately, many religious people thought they could skip the middle step (since it is difficult) and simply renounce sex in the beginning. That is why they never gave birth to anything inside. To give birth, sex is required. No one can be born without sex.

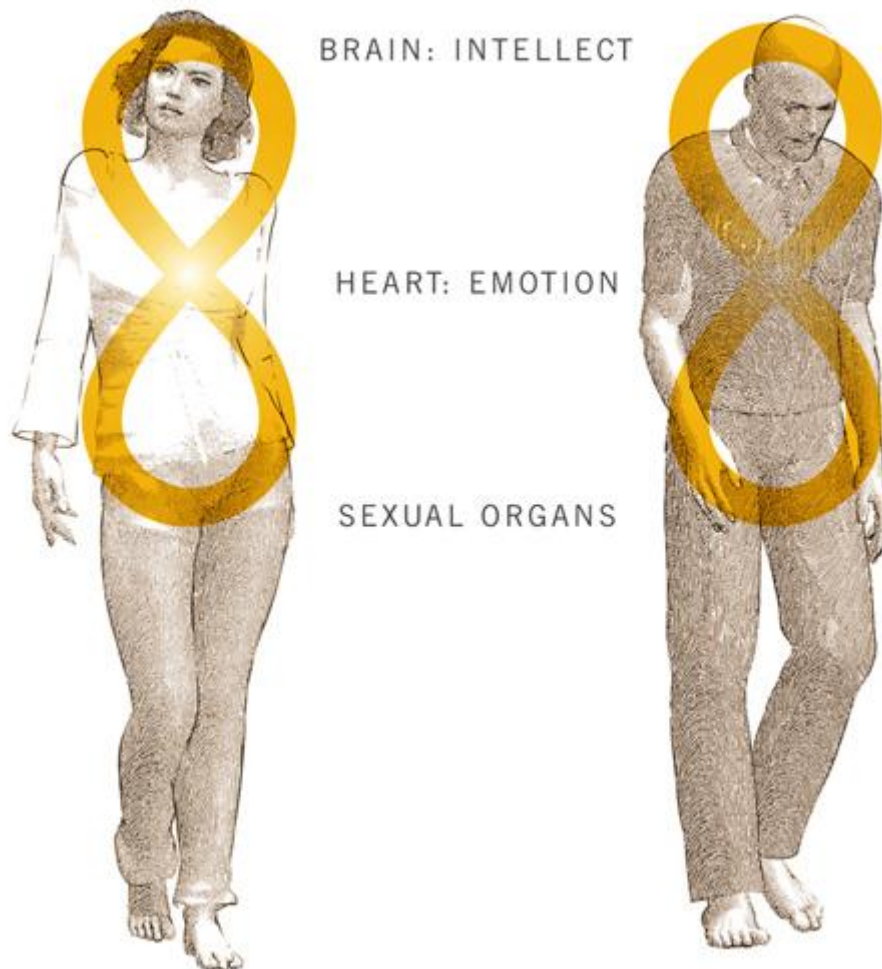
In each stage, there is sacrifice, death, and birth.

The single person sacrifices sexual engagement and experience of sexuality with others. There is death in that. Lust suffers a lot, which is a good thing, because in the suffering of that lust and the denial of that lust, it may be cleansed and purified, and from that emerges [Chastity](#), which is love. True love. Monks and nuns were in preparation to really love, not lust. Not be victims of animal sex. By the time they were prepared to enter a marriage, they could then meet their partner with love, not lust, but truly love them. So we see there sacrifice, death, and birth.

And then upon entering into the marriage, the couple had to maintain their vows and yet be married. This is a mystery that is hidden in the writings of Paul, who says exactly that: "they that have wives be as though they had none." [1 Corinthians 7]. So at this stage, the aspirant needs to be married, to be in love, to engage in the sexual act, but to continue to restrain the energy, and to not indulge in animal lust. In other words, to continue to avoid the [orgasm](#), to continue to retain those forces. In that act, there is a sacrifice. The energy is restrained, the lust suffers, it dies, and from that death, love, [Chastity](#), and beauty emerges. This is the secret teaching hidden in every religion. It is the nature of upright [Tantra](#) or [Alchemy](#). There is also a negative aspect as well, but we do not teach that here.

To enter those mysteries, we begin where we are now. We need to understand our own level of being and understand how we are working with these energies in ourselves: our sexual energy, emotional energy, and mental energy. We also need to analyze what we are becoming [bhava], because in each moment, we are transforming energy. The energy, forces, are flowing through us constantly.

Everything we eat, drink, and breathe is a transformation of energy. So that Wheel of Becoming is ourselves, and what we are becoming is propelled by our behavior, spiritually, psychologically, and sexually.



Every action we perform physically, emotionally, mentally, creates. So if in our moment to moment existence, we are nourishing and protecting our anger, we are becoming that. It defines our level of being. We then irradiate anger, not beauty. And if in our [three brains](#) we are nourishing, protecting, and feeding lust, that is our level of being, and we irradiate lust and we affect others with it, just as their lust affects us. That is our level. That is not an angel. That is a devil.

Let us be honest. Let us be honest and direct about where we are, where we stand, so that we can change.

One of the greatest lessons of the bhavachakra is that we can change. The wheel is constantly moving. Every action we perform propels our trajectory through space-time, and if we change for the better, we raise our level of being. It is not easy, but it can be done. This is the beginning of any sincere, genuine, spiritual, religious or mystical tradition. Right here: ethics, from moment to moment. Learning to observe yourself, learning to see how you behave, physically, emotionally, and mentally, and also learning to see what comes of our behavior.

In other words, one learns to not look for blame outside, to not seek and point at sources of suffering outside of ourselves, but to realize that we are creating our experience with each action we take. If we are suffering, it is our own level of being that produces it. If we are an angry type of person, if we are a proud type of person, we are putting ourselves in that circumstance for the pride to be fed, stimulated, and nourished, and that is what is making us suffer. That is what is making others suffer. We create it. The very first line of probably the most important teaching of the Buddha Shakyamuni basically states that our lives are the result how we use our mind.

“All things have the nature of mind. Mind is the chief and takes the lead. If the mind is clear, whatever you do or say will bring happiness that will follow you like your shadow.

“All things have the nature of mind. Mind is the chief and takes the lead. If the mind is polluted, whatever you do or say leads to suffering that will follow you as a cart trails a horse.” - Dhammapada 1:1-2

We become according to our psychological state. We are what we are now because of how we have been thinking and behaving previously, so if our life is characterized by suffering of different types, it is because of our own behavior that we are in our situation. If we wish to change it, we must change our behavior. Naturally, the external aspect will change as well.

Our goal, obviously, is to escape suffering. The way we are now, we are really trapped in painful and repetitive cycles. This is one of the most surprising thing to many students to learn in the beginning, something that you don't necessarily learn intellectually, but as you truly start to practice self-observation, self-remembering and [Meditation](#), you start to realize that you day to day life is incredibly repetitive. Not only incredibly repetitive, but you are repeating the same types of suffering again and again. It is shocking and disturbing to see that. That is a characteristic of being asleep psychologically and spiritually, which we are. We are not awake.

Being Asleep, Being Awake

I know everyone thinks that they are awake, but we are not talking about the sleep of the physical body. We are talking about the sleep of the [Consciousness](#). Our state of [Consciousness](#) right now is extremely low. It is characterized by an utter lack of direction. Our [Consciousness](#) is very hazy and dim. It is constantly distracted. You may notice that through the course of this lecture, you pick up only a sentence or two before you are distracted and thinking of something else. Perhaps I remind you of something and your mind wanders off for a moment and then you return your focus to me and do not know what I am talking about? That is because the [Consciousness](#) is asleep. It may seem funny, but it is sad. We are asleep. Someone with an awakened [Consciousness](#) does not have that experience. Someone who is awake is here and now and is not distracted. They perceive everything, not only outside, but most importantly, inside. Someone who is awake, even a beginner who is awakening, does not forget themselves, they remember that they are in the body, they know consciously that they are in the physical world, and also, someone who is awakened knows when they are out of the physical body. When the physical body is asleep, they know that the physical body is asleep, and they know that they are in the dream world. Yet, they do not dream. They are awake in that world, aware of being there. If you want to know if you are awake or asleep, observe what happens to you through the day and night. If you lose cognizance of yourself for an instant, you are asleep. This is how rigorous it is to be awake. To be awake is to be Buddha. That is the meaning of the word. Buddha means “awakened.” It is to have the [Consciousness](#) fully activated, present, here and now. No haziness, no dreaminess, no day dreaming, no distractions, no self-forgetting. When awakened, the [Consciousness](#) is bright, clear, luminous, perceptive, present, here and now, never stopping, and it irradiates a quality of serenity and penetrating insight.

The term Buddha in Sanskrit means as a noun “awakened one, enlightened, sage, knowledge.” When used as an adjective, it can mean “intelligent, conscious, awake, or wise.” Every person in every religion wants that. They use other names, for instance, the Christians want to be “angels.” Many believe that they already are angels, even though Jesus never said this.

Every religion has their own names for this state or level of being, this bhava. The term Buddha is a very useful term to define this state, because it is non-physical. The term Buddha does not refer to a body or person. It is a state of being. Everybody nowadays on this planet thinks that Buddha was one man, just as everyone thinks that Christ was one man, but these terms are not names. They are titles. They are descriptions. They are adjectives. Christ is a term for a force in nature. Buddha is a term for a level of being, a bhava, a state of existence. Yet, even among Buddhas, there are levels and levels. There is not one Buddha. Every human being who perfects herself becomes a Buddha. There are very few on this planet, but in the universe, there are an uncountable number of Buddhas.



I am emphasizing this because we need to clearly see what we are not, in order to understand what we must become. To become that, we have to not be what we are now, which means what we are now has to die. This is uncomfortable. What we are now, our name, our resentments, our attachments, our ambitions, all have to die. This includes spiritual ambitions. It states in a sacred scripture, “All ambition is punished by the Law of Nemesis (Karma).” This includes spiritual ambition, because spiritual ambition is rooted in pride. Our longing for divinity should not be based in pride, envy, jealousy, or fear. It should be rooted in the heart because of love.

In order to become a Buddha, we have to be born. A Buddha does not come out of nothing. A Buddha is also born like any other thing in nature. Any living creature in nature is born. A Buddha or angel is

no exception. Let us observe how things are born in nature. Every insect, every animal, every human being, every living conscious entity, even plants, are born from sex, without any exception. Buddhas, angels, and gods are born out of sex, but not out of animal sex. Animal sexuality creates animals. To create an angel, a master, a Buddha, you need sexuality that corresponds to that level of being, not animal sexuality.

Those who engage in sexuality as an animal will have the level of being as an animal, and any result of that act will be animal, without any exception. That is how nature works. To create a Buddha, your sexuality has to be at that level. Aspiring to that. Purifying. Clean. No lust. This is a tall order. That is why there are not that many Buddhas here. Few are willing to do it. Few are willing to sacrifice their lust, for the lust to die so that the Buddha can be born. It can happen, because inside of us, we have the embryo of a Buddha.

Tathagatagarbha: Buddha Nature

In Sanskrit, this embryo is called "Tathagatagarbha" तथागतगर्भ. This word Tathagata is very difficult to translate to English because, like [Hebrew](#), Sanskrit is multi-layered. "Thus gone one" is one way to translate it. Or "thus coming one" or "thus perfected one." Tathagata is a name of the Buddha Shakyamuni. If you read any Buddhist scriptures, the Buddha refers to himself as Tathagata. He refers to himself with this word that is really difficult to translate.

Tathagata refers to the beyond, from tatha, the Absolute. It means "such-ness, that-ness, the intrinsic essence of everything," the Ain Soph, in [Hebrew](#) words. It is the shunyata, the foundational potentiality of all things, the Emptiness.

A fully developed Buddha is one that has fully understood, comprehended, and merged with that. We call them "paramarthasatyas," those who have gone beyond to the absolute happiness. So, "tatha" refers to that such-ness.

Gata can mean "coming" or "going." It is similar to the word ga-te in the famous mantra of the prajnaparamita: gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi swaha. Ga-te is usually interpreted as "gone." So this term Tathagata can mean "The one who has gone to thus-ness" or "The one who is coming from thus-ness" or "The one who is perfected" who has "become the Absolute."

An alternate rendering of this Tathagata can be "beyond coming and going." In other words, it can be a name for someone who has gotten off of the wheel of becoming, the repetitive wheel, the bhavachakra. The third part of Tathagatagarbha is "garbha", which means "embryo, womb." So you see, Tathagatagarbha translated means "the embryo" or the potential to be "one that goes beyond."

This being so difficult to translate, teach, and understand, in Asian traditions they simplified this and started calling it Buddhadatu, which means "Buddha nature." So now in English they call it "Buddha Nature." Anyone who has studied Buddhism has heard of the Buddha nature, and they say, "Everybody has the Buddha nature." So now people say, "So if everyone has the Buddha Nature, that means that I am a Buddha." This shows you how quickly degenerated the teaching has become because of our lazy brains, because of our pride.

Having Buddha nature does not mean that we are a Buddha. It means that inside of us we have a seed. One cannot say that an apple seed is an apple. One cannot say that an apple seed is an apple tree. Yet, this is what people are saying now about the Buddha nature.

The seed of an apple tree cannot give you a fruit until the seed dies, and out of the death of the seed, the tree emerges, delicate, weak, and it is very vulnerable. The tree must grow for a long time, and have everything exactly right or it will die.

Out of all the apples that come from a tree, and the millions of seeds in all those apples, how many trees are finally born? How many of those trees are destroyed by nature, animals, human beings, until finally one fortunate tree produces fruit again? Mathematically, the emergence of a tree is a small miracle. How much more miraculous it is for a buddha to emerge!

We are subject to the same laws of nature. We are merely seeds. Inside of us is the potential for a buddha, an angel, a master. From us can come a Buddha, but only if the circumstances and conditions are correct, and the correct forces are applied to protect and nourish that seed so at the right moment, the seed can die, new birth can occur, and that new Buddha can emerge and grow.

We are subject to those laws, without any exception. Unfortunately humanity does not know the laws, rather, has ignored them, because all of the religions have the rules, but we ignore them because they contradict our desires. We prefer to nourish our desires than to nourish the seed of our inner Buddha. Interestingly, the term "garbha" also means "fire." It also means "child" or "conception." So, we could translate Tathagatagarbha as "fire of one thus coming," or "conception of one thus coming."

The problem is, we are so blinded by our psyche that we don't understand how to nourish our seed. We reject the teachings of our traditional religions, so now everybody is seeking alternative religions. We are so hypnotized by our desires that we only seek religions that agree with our desires, or that will feed our fear or our lust. That is why humanity is flocking towards those new religions, ideas, and concepts that make us feel better about being degenerated. They give us an "insurance policy" to heaven. They say, "If you just say these words, and give us some money, you will go to heaven." Humanity loves that, but it is all lies. Nature does not work that way. [God](#) does not work that way. Divinity does not want our money. Divinity wants for us to merge with it, which means we have to become like it. Jesus said,

"Be ye perfect, as your father in heaven is perfect."

Who amongst the Christians is striving for perfection? They are not. They say, "I believe in Jesus, so I am freed," and they keep feeding their lust, anger, and pride, and they believe that they are going to go to heaven even when Jesus said,

"No murderer, no thief, no idolater, no fornicator will go to heaven" and all of them are worshiping the idols of their pride, lust, and envy and all of them are lying and killing each other with their language, their words, their speech, everything. We all do it.

The members of each religion consider themselves holy, and others unholy. Few Christians would accept that Jesus was talking to them when he said,

"Woe unto you, scribes [intellectuals] and Pharisees [fanatics], hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. [Thou] blind Pharisee [fanatic], cleanse first that [which is] within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead [men's] bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." - Matthew 23

The so-called Christians waged many wars, killed millions of people, tortured millions of innocent souls, all in the so-called "name of religion." And yet, they consider themselves innocent. All of us are like this: we never see our own crimes.

Nevertheless, buried amidst the filth of our inner temple waits a seed that can be grown, but for that, we need radical change.

Three Requirements for Change

We need to change. In that process of change, we need help. The help is there. It is available. It can be had.

Firstly, in order to acquire spiritual birth, you need the will to do it. If someone does not have the will to do it, it will never happen.

Secondly, we need the instructions. If someone has the will but no instructions, they will go nowhere. History is filled with examples of people like that, particularly in the Asian and alchemical traditions. We hear stories of people who burned inside, crying and suffering, wanting the knowledge in order to be born again, who did everything they could, went to every teacher, traveled all over the world, suffered enormous hardships to find the secret and yet failing because of karma. Now, in these moments, the teachings are freely available, yet few want them. It is very ironic. Now that you have the access to the teachings, you simply need the will to do it.

The third thing you need are the circumstances. Anyone who is attending a class or hearing the lecture probably has the circumstances to do it, meaning you are not brain-dead. You have not been shot through the head and are in a vegetable state in the hospital. You are physically active to some degree. You have some capacity to listen, read, and understand. You can breathe and eat. Your heart functions. You have some cognizance. From such circumstances, you can change.

If you have the knowledge and the will, you can change, according to your circumstance, according to your level, according to your will. Now from that point, there will be many differences. What is going to make the most significant impact there amongst all of those factors is not the circumstances. Many people complain, "My circumstances are holding me back." or "My wife is making my life hell!" It is not your wife. It is not your husband. Or some people say, "My teacher is no good. He did not teach me how to meditate." Or, "My teacher did not teach me this or that." Those are excuses. The

knowledge is available, now especially. Ten years ago, twenty years ago, it was more difficult, especially in English. Now, there is no excuse. The teachings are freely and easily available. So, if we have the circumstances and the teachings, what is the last factor there? Willpower.

The reason most people do not achieve anything spiritually, or they do not advance, is simply a question of will. The Gnostic schools are filled with students who have the circumstances and the teachings, but fail to change. They have long lists of complaints and excuses, but none stand up to analysis. What they lack is the will to change. They do not want to change.

Finally, if we have the three basic requirements, the main support we need to achieve it, once we start studying and practicing the teaching, the support and help that we get isn't from a physical school, although useful, it is not from a teacher, although it is useful, it isn't from spiritual friends, although that is useful, it is not from a husband or a wife, although that is useful, the main help comes from your inner divinity. Which, by the way, we all forget. None of us remember our Divine Mother. This is a characteristic of being asleep. None of us remember our inner Buddha, our inner father, from moment to moment. This is a characteristic of being asleep.

Someone who is awakened never forgets [God](#), not for an instant. A person who is awake is in continual remembrance of their divinity. Not themselves, but their inner source. Their inner light. In the beginning of the work, it is most significant for the aspirant or the devotee to remember their inner Divine Mother. On a mere logical level, you can see why. When you are a child, in many cases, it is the mother who is more sympathetic. It is the mother who is more directly responsible for feeding the child, cleaning the child, protecting the child, or taking care of the child from moment to moment. The father, generally, is the one who is out working, hunting, providing, and protecting the family. The mother is the one doing the moment to moment dirty work with the baby. Spiritually, this is also true. Our inner Divine Mother is our guide. Our protector. Unfortunately, in the West, this aspect of spirituality has been cut out, hugely impacted by politics and dogma for thousands of years. In the East, it has not been forgotten.

Maya

In Sanskrit, there are thousands of names for the Divine Mother. One of the most important ones is Maya. This name Maya is extremely deep, yet spelled with only two letters. The implications of those two letters extend throughout the entirety of Hinduism and Buddhism. Every aspect. Every level. You can give levels and levels and levels of lectures about the term Maya, from the beginning level (Sutrayana) to the Mahayana, to the Tantrayana. In each of the levels of teaching, the meanings go deeper.

Importantly, in the past—we are talking four to five thousand years ago—Maya meant “art, wisdom, extraordinary or supernatural power.” It referred to a type of creative power that is far beyond the human level. It is a name of [God](#) as feminine. Maya is Goddess. Somehow, around the time of the Vedas emerging, which is hard to date specifically, but some where around four thousand years ago, the term gradually changed and adopted a new aspect in terms of the written literature, and the new aspect is what people talk about now, that Maya means, “illusion, unreality, deception, trick, sorcery, witchcraft,” etc.

So we find a duality in this term Maya, something positive and something negative. What is important to grasp here is that Maya is one thing. Maya is the Goddess. Maya is nature itself. When we think of nature, we think of plants, trees, birds, bees, and all of the physical things. That is not what we are talking about in [Gnosis](#) when we talk about nature. When we talk about nature, we are talking about seven dimensions in nature, not just the physical one. The physical dimension is the most gross, the most dense, and it is also the least important, the most superficial.

Nature as Divine Mother is Prakriti. It is the root energy, the first emergence out of the womb of nature. It is where the primordial potentiality of all things, the Absolute, the Ain Soph, becomes something. So, that first bhava happens. That wheel turns for the first time. The bhavachakra is in motion, so the three forces, the trinity, merges two and creates. That two is father and mother: Shiva and Shakti, Ab and Ima, Yab and Yum. That is the [God](#) and Goddess of all things. The El and Eloah.



In their union, they are Elohim. The Elohim, which is [Hebrew](#) for "[God](#) / Goddess", created—in other words, bhava, becoming. That is all hidden in the first two chapters of Genesis. It is all hidden in the tantric scriptures. It is hidden in every religion. That first emergence is the ocean of life, and that ocean of life gets many names. In Hinduism, it is Maya. In the Bible, it is Schamayim. It may also be called Shekinah, which is the light or radiance of the Divine Mother. That light and radiance is the fire, the [Hebrew](#) letter [Shin](#) in Schamayim, which is translated as "heavens" in the Bible, but it literally means, "fire water."

The Water and the Fire

Now, I want to point out an important correlation here. The Sanskrit word Maya, extraordinary or supernatural power, the Goddess, the Divine Mother, is the ocean of existence. The first letter of Maya is ऋ, which means "water." Similarly, the [Hebrew](#) letter [Mem](#) (which also means water) appears twice in the word mayim, water, in order to represent two waters: one above and one below. In the Bible, the waters above are called Schamayim, which the word Mayim (water) with the letter [Shin](#) (fire) at the beginning. The sexual union of [God](#) as Father and [God](#) as Mother is in the waters of life, the upper waters, and their love is that fire, which, conceived in her womb, produces the light of our Being: the fire ([Shin](#)) descends, becoming Horus, the Buddha. In order for that Buddha to become fully awakened, he needs that same process to occur in the lower waters, which are in our sexual organs. He needs the fire in those waters to be fecundated, so he can emerge here in this level as well.

All of this is hidden in the word Tathagatagarba, the "fire-conception-child of one thus coming," the embryo of the inner Buddha.

Maya, the Divine Mother, is the wheel itself. She is the body of nature.

When people hear about the Divine Mother, most think of a woman in a physical body who lives in some cloud-filled place very far away from here. That is not the Divine Mother. That is an idea that people have in their heads because they went to Sunday school too much or read too many comic books. The Divine Mother is nature. The Divine Mother has no form. The Divine Mother is the very fabric of existence. Contemplate that.

Everything that you are, not just physically, but emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, is her fabric. If you really meditate on that, really contemplate it, you would be ashamed that with this body that she gave you, you get angry, blame others, criticize, gossip, lie, steal, and fornicate. With her body, you commit all of the crimes you are not supposed to commit. Your physical body is her matter, her energy, her gift. The Divine Mother, the creator of everything, gave it to you to use, and what have you done with it? It is an astonishing thing to meditate on.

The Goddess

Now you can see why we have this duality in the name Maya. If the Divine Mother is the fabric of everything, she is also the fabric of Hell. She is also the fundamental ground of our lust, anger, and pride. Is it not so? That is why in Hinduism we find that the Divine Mother is symbolized as dual. She is Durga, Parvati, Shakti, Lakshmi, which are all names of the beautiful goddess. Yet, she is also Kali, "the black one." She is also Proserpine, Hekate, the goddess of hell, the one who takes her children by the hand into the abyss to suffer and pay what they owe. She does this out of love, to purify her children, because they do not want to purify themselves.

Many worship that aspect of the Divine Mother related to the hell realms, although many do not realize that is what they are doing. They perform sacrifices to her. They think that by appeasing her through committing crimes, they will gain benefit. They seek to expand desire on the earth, to incite others to indulge in animalism, lust, violence. They are mistaken. She does not work that way.

The Divine Mother of the hell realms is the same Divine Mother of the heavens. She always works in harmony with her own laws. That is, she herself is the law of action and consequence: karma. She rewards us for our deeds. If we act in ways that help her children rise out of suffering, she ensures that we receive our due reward. Similarly, if we act in ways that cause her children to suffer, she ensures that we receive our compensation: lessons to show us that suffering is unpleasant, and that we should stop.

She is the wheel. She is the fabric of everything. We see everything according to the conditioning of our mind. If our mind is conditioned by anger, lust, pride, envy, we see everything through that veil. In other words, as we produce actions through ourselves, we create our reality. As we indulge in our pride, anger, lust, and continually think in those ways, we see the world through our anger, pride, envy. The one who suffers from envy feels that they deserve what others have. When they perceive the world, they always look at it in that way. They say, "She has what I want!" or, "He has what I want!" So, that person is not seeing reality. They are seeing through the filter of their desire. So, they are a victim of Maya as illusion. They are transforming energy and interacting with nature at that level. For them, the body of the Divine Mother is illusion. Or should I say for us, because we are all victims of that perception. That is not her fault. She is not doing that to us to punish us. We are doing it to ourselves.

This is a common, grave misunderstanding of people who study Hinduism and Buddhism, and they learn about Maya, and come to believe that the Divine Mother is evil and cruel, that she is surrounding us with illusion to mock us. That is not true. We are mocking ourselves. We are hurting the Divine Mother with our behavior. She suffers when she sees us suffering. She loves us. Actually, she can help us, because she is also the mother of the Buddha.

When you study this type of philosophy, you see symbolized in many different myths this terrible situation of suffering that all of us are trapped within. The mythological heroes have to descend into the abyss in order to rise up as heroes, and that is our situation. We are trapped in illusion and deception that is self-created, but it is precisely in that deception and illusion that we can acquire the knowledge in order to emerge out, greater than before, like a phoenix rising out of the darkness. So, the Divine Mother is the one who makes all of this possible.

Mother of the Buddha

In the Buddhist tradition, this is symbolized in a very interesting way. The story of the life of the Buddha has many stages; one common interpretation or presentation of the story has twelve fundamental steps. I am not going to talk about all of them today, because that would take a long time, but I want to point out two important stages, the second and the third.

This image shows a queen resting at night; and in this particular painting, she has her head upright, but she is supposed to be asleep, and she is having a dream. In the dream, a white elephant comes from heaven and enters into her side, into her womb. This dream is a symbol of how the Buddha descends into the womb of his mother in order for him to be born.

There are some interesting details in the story. Firstly, she is a queen. This indicates that she is in a state of being that is higher than others.

Secondly, she is in the time of her monthly purification retreat, which means she is on her menstrual cycle. In Hindu tradition, when the wife is having her cycle, she lives apart from the husband. In other words, they do not have sexual relations during those days out of respect, because during the menstrual cycle, the woman is cleansing impurities out of the body. During this time that she had the dream and became pregnant. This indicates that the pregnancy was not caused by the “usual” method.

This story represents how the father, who is above, represented by the elephant, merges into the Divine Mother in order to extend itself into the world or enter into manifestation. The elephant here represents our Innermost, our inner Buddha, our Atman. Or as the gospels say, "Our father who is in heaven."

The Elephant represents the power of the Holy Spirit who creates through this union of [God](#) and Goddess. It is a union of [Chastity](#); that is, no [Fornication](#), no [orgasm](#). That is symbolized by her being in her menstrual cycle and being separated from her husband. It is an immaculate conception.

Immaculate means to be perfectly clean. No spilling. As it says in Leviticus,

דְּבַרוּ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתֶּם אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ כִּי יִהְיֶה זָב מִבְּשָׁרוֹ זָבוּ טָמֵא הוּא:

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath an ejaculation of [semen](#) out of his flesh, because of his ejaculation he is filthy. - Leviticus 15

“...you need to have no release or loss of [semen](#) whatsoever.” - 14th Dalai Lama

Our inner Buddha is born of an immaculate conception, like the impregnation of Mary, when Jesus was to be born, the Holy Spirit descended as a white dove, just like the white elephant of Buddhism. It is the same symbol.

The mother of the Buddha is called Maya. We find two different variations in Buddhism, Mahamaya and Mayadevi. They mean the same thing. Maha means “great.” Devi means “goddess.” So it means Great Maya or Maya Goddess.

Many Buddhists, like the Christians, interpret the scriptures literally, and believe that there was literally a woman named Maya who was literally a queen who literally gave birth to the Buddha and the Buddha was born purely and totally awakened. They do not understand that these are symbols, just like the tradition of Jesus. There are literal elements in these stories, such as how the man we call the Buddha had a physical mother, but the story of his life is not directly literal to the actual physical circumstances. Here, we are interested in the real meaning, the reason the story was given to us, which is so that we can learn from it and apply it to our own spiritual birth.

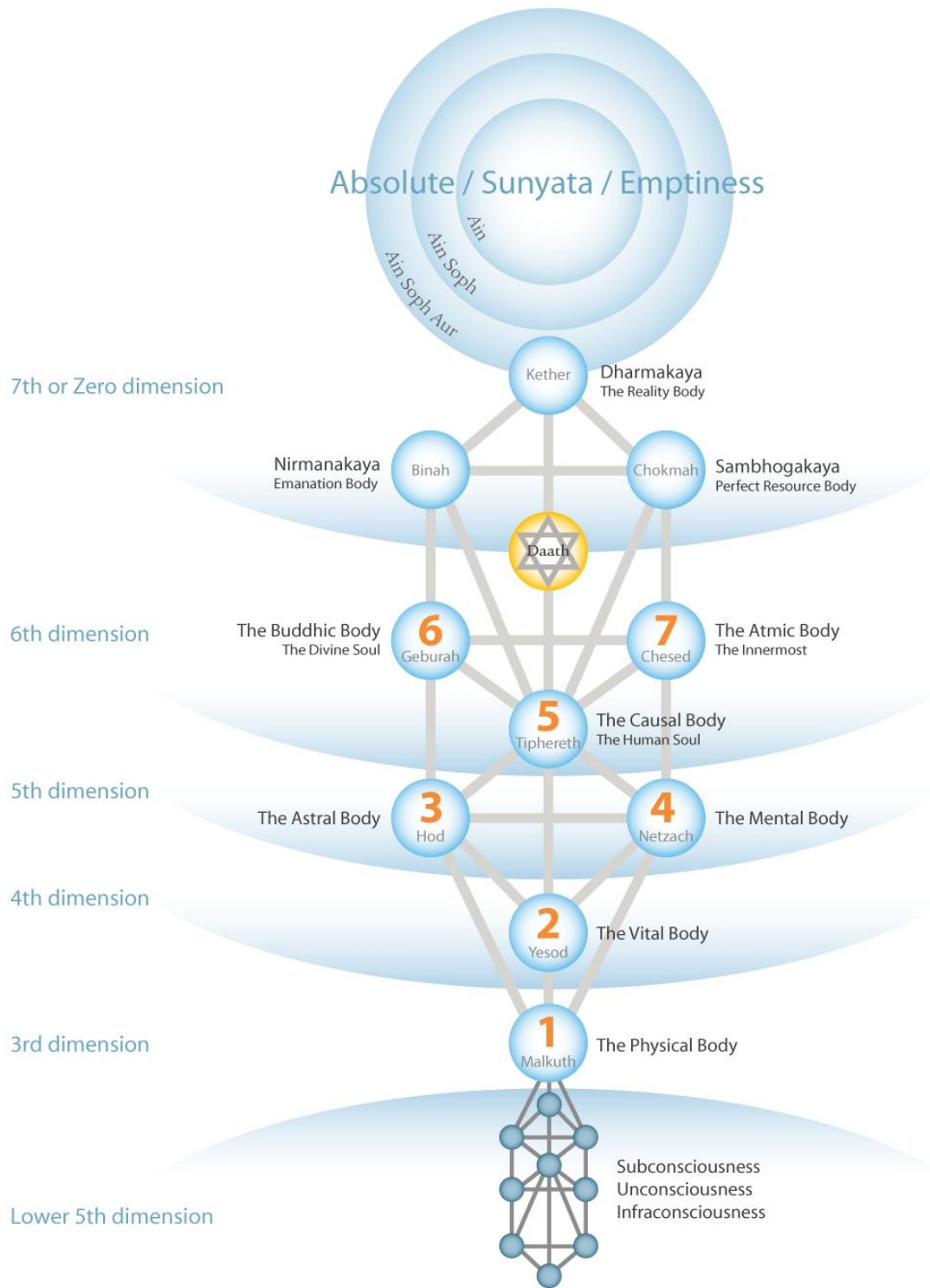
In the next phase of the story, after ten lunar months she decides to go into the garden. Everybody knows about the garden of Eden in the Bible. Well, this story is not from the Bible. This story comes from India, and is older than the Bible. Mahamaya goes into the garden, pregnant, and suddenly she feels that the child is going to be born, so she reaches up and grabs hold of the branch of a tree. As she grabs the branch and steadies herself, suddenly the child spontaneously bursts from her side, the same way that he entered, and emerged like a ray of light, like a sun.



When that happened, all of the gods were astonished. They all came to observe this birth. Indra, who is the equivalent of the Greco-Roman Zeus-Jupiter, came to observe and to offer clothing to the newborn Buddha. Indra represents the highest part of ourselves. Indra is the upper trinity (the three forces), and the clothing he offers are celestial garments, the wedding garments mentioned by Jesus, which represent the seven sheaths, koshas, bodies, that the Being needs.

At that moment, the golden child took seven steps, and with each step, a lotus emerged. At the seventh step, he pointed to the sky and said, “I am the greatest in this world.”

Many Buddhists, of course, believe that this is all literal and that it actually happened this way. The real meaning, though, is far more important and deep. This is not a literal story. It is a symbolic story that represents levels and stages of spiritual development that we ourselves need to attain. The Buddha here represents our inner Buddha, our Being; if we work accurately by ascending the seven steps, he can incarnate in us. The seven steps represent stages of spiritual birth; with each step a birth happens. With each step, a new body is born.



The seven steps: seven initiations to create seven bodies.

The Buddha, in us, is born through a series of seven steps, and upon reaching the seventh, he then can point back to the Absolute, and say, "I am." Just as Jesus taught, "I am." That "I am" is not the personality. It is not me, myself, the I. It is the Innermost, the Christ, the absolute, the real Being. This story is not about you and me becoming Buddha, it is about our Innermost becoming a Buddha. This story shows how it happens.

The seven steps are a profound symbol found in traditions all over the world. One beautiful version is in an apocryphal story of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

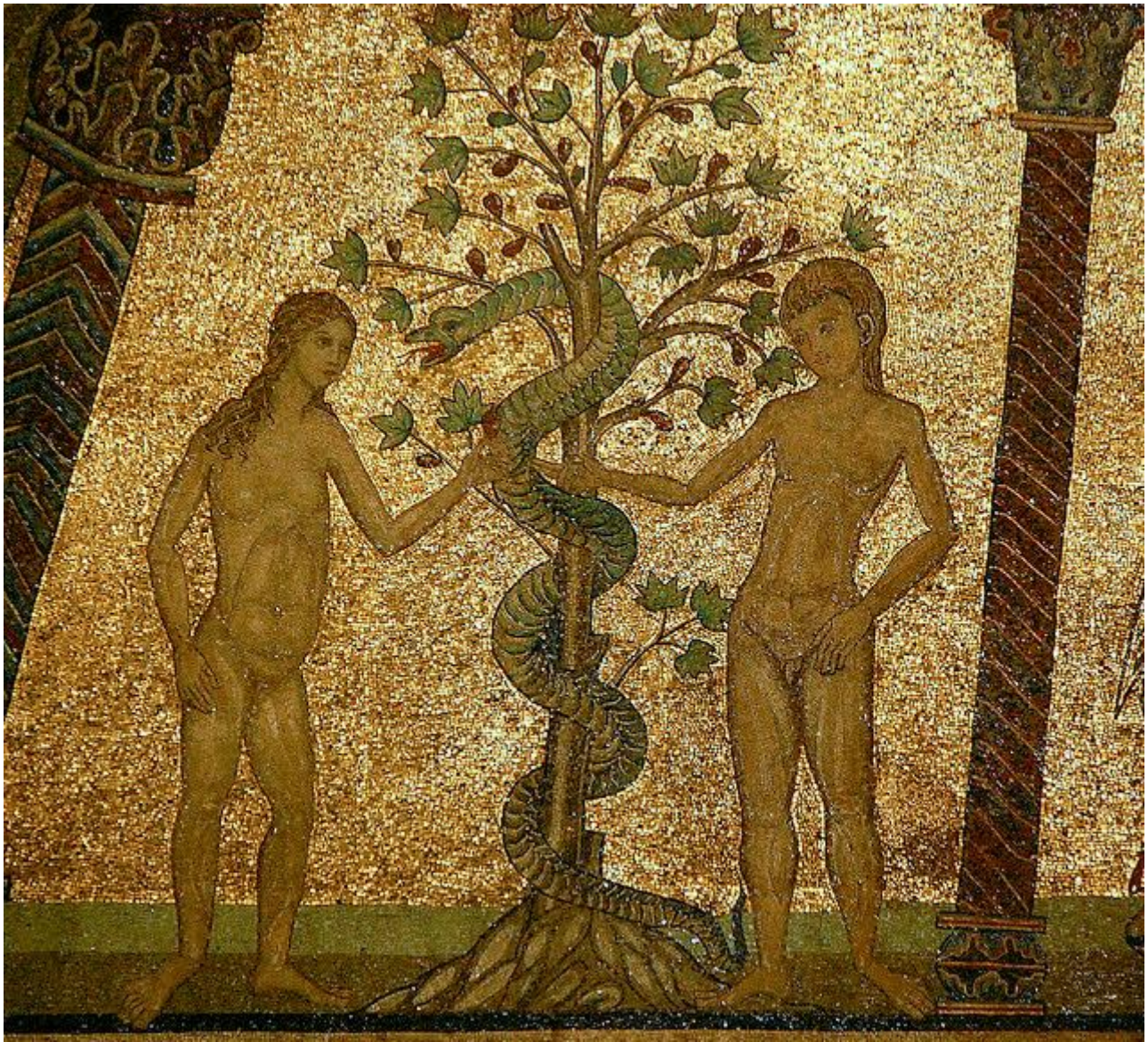
"And the child (Mary) grew strong day by day; and when she was six [Vav] months old, her mother set her on the ground to try whether she could stand, and she walked **seven steps** and came into her bosom; and she snatched her up, saying: "As the Lord my God liveth, thou shalt not walk on this earth until I bring thee into the temple of the Lord. And she made a sanctuary in her bed-chamber, and allowed nothing common or unclean to pass through her." - The Protevangelium of James

The Tree

Now, we are going to talk about more specifically how we help to achieve this birth. I mentioned that the tree that the Divine Mother grabbed the branch of a tree. Traditionally, this tree was said to be a ficus. Did you know that the tree that the Buddha meditated under is a ficus tree?



Did you know that in esotericism, it is said that the tree in the garden of Eden that Adam and Eve ate of was a ficus?



Is it not interesting that Adam and Eve and the birth of the Buddha happened in a garden with a ficus tree? Do you believe that it was an accident that these stories are so similar? I do not think so. The ficus tree is the family of the fig tree, which is a deep symbol related to feminine sexual forces that flow in all of nature, related to the Divine Mother. We have those forces in us. They are related to Ida, Havah, Eve.

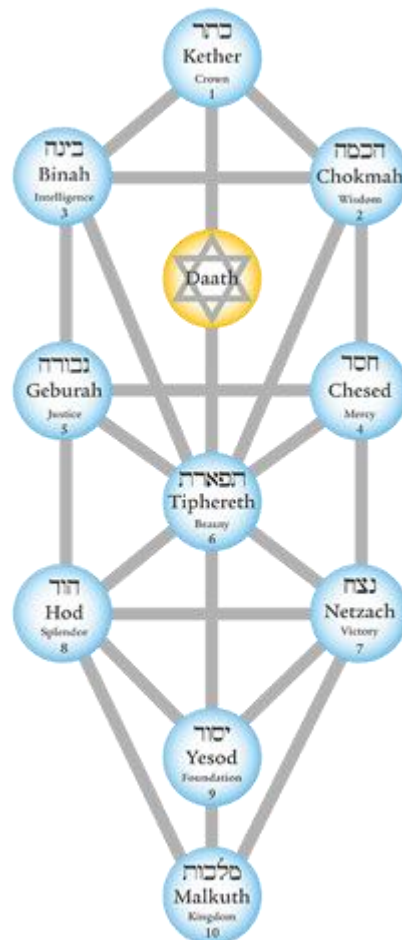
As you know, in the story of Adam and Eve, Eve eats the fruit which causes Adam and Eve to be cast out of the garden. Again, that is not a literal story, it is symbolic. Our inner Eve (our sexual organs) is tempted by the serpent (Lucifer, Mara), and then ate of the forbidden fruit ([orgasm](#)) and gave to Adam (the brain) to eat of it, which caused our [Consciousness](#) to fall into deception, addiction, desire. That is why we are all in the wilderness suffering. In order to return to Eden, we have to restore the fallen serpent of Ida, the feminine sexual forces in us that are wrapped around our spinal column.

We need to return to that tree, and conquer Mara (Lucifer), who uses his daughters to attempt to seduce us. That is how the Buddha becomes born in us. By learning to work with our sexual energy.



In the Bible, it says that the Elohim put in the garden the [Tree of Life](#) in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Christians and Jews, of course, believe that these trees were actual physical trees, no matter how many of thousands of years ago that they believed it literally happened, they do not see that those trees are symbolic trees, not physical trees.

The [Tree of Life](#) represents our being, our bhava. The [Tree of Life](#) and the bhavachakra are the same thing, just shown in a different way. The [Tree of Life](#) we represent in the tradition of [Kabbalah](#) has the structure of ten spheres arranged as three triangles with one sphere below.



The [Tree of Life](#) represents the levels of being, both in nature, and in ourselves. It is organized by dimensions. The lowest dimensions are the bottom, the most refined at the top.

The [Tree of Knowledge](#) shares its roots with the [Tree of Life](#). The [Tree of Knowledge](#) is [Gnosis](#), Da'ath, which is shown here just below the upper triangle.

The [Tree of Knowledge](#) is a mysterious sphere, hidden, secret, and protected. That is why in the Bible the angel protects the way with a flaming sword. That is why Jehovah Elohim said, "Thou shalt not eat of it" because to take anything from this tree implies a great responsibility. To work with the [Tree of Knowledge](#), you have to know what you are doing. You see, the name of it is the [Tree of Knowledge](#) of good and evil. That is how it is translated in English in the popular Bibles, but the [Hebrew](#) words do not say good and evil; the [Hebrew](#) words are "Tov ve Rah." Tov / tob means goodness. Goodness is a term that refers to our Innermost ([Geburah](#), [Chesed](#); Mercy, Goodness) Rah means impurity. Illusion. In the Bible it says that the [orgasm](#) is pollution, impure. So we see here that this is "the tree of the [Gnosis](#) of [Chastity](#) and [Fornication](#)," two forms of sexuality: animal and divine. The symbol of Adam and Eve eating of the fruit is a symbol of humanity learning about the [orgasm](#) and becoming addicted to it. Because of that addiction, humanity lost their powers of being able to see [God](#), talk to [God](#), directly relate to [God](#), and was cast out of Eden because of their own action. Adam and Eve left because of their behavior. They cast themselves out, and we are the consequence: people who have no direct knowledge of [God](#). We have a lot of beliefs and a lot of theories, but we are asleep. To return to Eden, to acquire direct knowledge of [God](#) means that we have to rectify the mistake and fix what we broke. We have to abide by the laws of the garden, and the law states, "Thou shalt not eat of it."

That means, we need to know what the tree is, we need to respect the [Tree of Knowledge](#), work with the [Tree of Knowledge](#), and we must not abuse the fruit, which is sexual energy.

We are sexual beings. Sex is a part of life. Sex creates life, including spiritual life. By restoring our sexuality to it's previous state, we can then elevate ourselves to a higher state. First, we have to fix the mistake that we have made.

Interestingly, I want to point out that in [Hebrew](#), the word for knowledge is [Daath](#), while in Sanskrit it is Bodhi, which has masculine and feminine forms: Bodha and Bodhi. Personally, I find that very interesting, that knowledge is both masculine and feminine, Adam and Eve. In other words, you need both.

The Two Extremes, and the Middle Way

So in the story of the Buddha, he was born unto a king and queen, grew up as a spoiled prince, had access to all of the riches of the world and indulged in it. He had all of the money, all of the power, all of the women, was an expert in everything, was handsome, skilled, and strong. He had everything that all of us want: good looks, money, fame, popularity, all of the princesses, he got married, he had children, but it stated that he then saw suffering. His parents tried to prevent him from seeing old age, death, and sickness, but fortunately, by the intervention of some other beings, he saw suffering, and was so moved with compassion that he decided to renounce all of the indulgences and pleasures of the world and he became a yogi.

He went to the forest; he renounced everything, he had only a robe and the bowl. He begged for his food. He had no money, nothing. He only meditated for many years. He became emaciated. He was at the point of death.



Let me pause the story for a moment and point out how much willpower that would take. How much will it would take to meditate that intensely, to have that much concern about suffering, because that is what motivated him. When he saw that he had all of the wealth, power, and glory, and then saw the suffering of others and that death was inevitable, he became overwhelmed and realized, "What is the point of having all of these material things, of being famous, popular, strong, handsome, or having sex, or children, or wives. What is the point if we are only going to get sick and die and then repeat it again over and over? Build up an attachment to all of these things that we have and then lose them. What is the point?" That is what moved him to renounce it all.

He then spent years in the jungle. It is not like going to the park here. We are talking about the jungle! Lions, tigers, bears, scorpions, and snakes, and yet, he did it. Symbolically, of course. There were literal events that happened, but we are talking about the symbolic importance of this. So we see two things here. We see that he had everything, and then he had nothing: two sides of a pendulum. One side is craving. All of the things that we want, wealth, popularity, good looks, we want all of the fame, we want others to envy and talk about us, to wish that they had what we have. He had all of that, but then he renounced it and went to the other side: aversion. He gave away everything, gave up everything, went to the jungle, and got to the brink of death because he was not eating. He was surviving on a single grain of rice a day. He became a skeleton with skin. That is how intensely he was meditating. All he did, all day and all night, was meditate.

Now, at this moment, he had an epiphany. He suddenly realized this duality that we can see so easily from our perspective here in the classroom, that he had everything and renounced it. These two extremes were too extreme. On one side he had too much, then on the other he had too little. In that moment, he realized his mistake. In that instant, at the brink of death, a woman appears, offering him a bowl of rice milk.



Having understood that his extreme avoidance of everything was harmful, he accepted the gift, and ate it. It is the first meal that he has had in years, and he was immediately and completely restored to health. Then, he set the bowl of rice milk in the river, and it flowed upstream against the current. Buddhists love this story, but sadly most have no idea what it actually means. This story represents how we enter into spiritual birth. How do we know that? The woman's name is Sujata सुजात, which means, “good birth.”

Here, the Buddha represents our [Consciousness](#)—the embryo of a Buddha—that is experiencing the coming and going of the Wheel of Becoming. We are experiencing from moment to moment, day to day, lifetime to lifetime, the extremes of karma. In one moment, we have everything, and in the next, it is taken away, and yet we continue to repeat the painful cycle, never comprehending it. You see, in the story, the Buddha comprehended it. That is what brought the third factor, the third force. He saw one extreme, he saw the other extreme, and then he saw the balance, the middle way. He realized and understood that the way to liberation is neither having too much, or too little. It is to be in the middle. In relation with birth, the middle way is to do as Paul advised, "To be married and be as though one is not," which is to engage in sexual union with our spouse, but not spill the sexual energy through the [orgasm](#).

First, everyone experiences what it is like to indulge in sexuality, to be hypnotized by the [orgasm](#). Then, when we see the suffering it brings, we learn how to renounce it, and enter into brahmacharya: [Chastity](#). We learn to avoid the sexual act and control the sexual energy. Yet, these are two extremes. The middle way is represented by Sujata offering the rice milk.

This symbolic story represents how the initiate, the [Consciousness](#), has to work in order to achieve spiritual birth. It is psychological, emotional, spiritual, sexual. The story represents how the upright path is neither through indulging in sex the way he did with his palatial lifestyle and having lots of women and wives, nor renouncing sex by having no women and being celibate. Neither way leads to spiritual birth, liberation.

The Life-giving Fluids

The way to full liberation is to be in the middle. That is why at that moment, at the brink of losing his existence appeared the Divine Mother in the form of his wife and his divine soul. She arrived to give him the answer: a bowl of rice milk. Now, I do not want to be crude, but it is obvious that rice milk looks like [semen](#). Does it not? A milky fluid with life giving elements in it. This scene represents the wife and husband sharing the nourishment of the soul which is in the sexual energy; they do not waste it by indulging in it, but restrain it, and are nourished.

All life is created by sexual energy. Spiritual is also created with it, but one must know how to do it.

The Buddha put the bowl of rice milk into the river of life, and it went against the current. This means that even though he cooperated sexually with the woman, he did not spill the fluids, or waste them in anyway, but instead, transmuted them. Rather than allowing those forces to follow the mechanical flow out of the body, he directs them to flows back where they came from: up the spinal column and back to the Absolute.

Those who indulge in the [orgasm](#) are carried by the mechanical forces of nature (the waters). The mechanical flow originates suffering. It carries everything downwards into the lower worlds. To go against the current requires willpower: to go against the mechanical forces inside of us.

By transmuting the sexual energy, the forces of the Divine Mother—the fire in the water—can create the soul. In [Hebrew](#), this is the letter [Shin](#) (fire) and the Mayim (water), which forms the Schamayim (fiery water; i.e. heaven).

This story of the Buddha is the same essential symbol of Jesus and the woman at the well that we find in the book of John:

"...whosoever drinketh of the [living] water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman saith unto him, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

Jesus saith unto her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." - [John 4: Jesus at the Well](#)

The answer to the life that we need is in the water, the rice milk, and it is found between husband and wife in immaculate sexuality. That is why in Buddhism, the highest mysteries always have this symbolism: Yab-Yum. Father-Mother. Shiva-Shakti. The union of masculine and feminine in [Chastity](#), in purity, creates. This is divine sexuality. Angelic. Buddhic. Not animal. There is no lust here. There is no [orgasm](#) here. There is transmutation of energy. There is no indulgence in sensation. There is sensation, but one neither indulges in it, on one extreme, or avoids it at the other extreme. Instead, one experiences it, and transmutes it back to the divine. No animality.

This is why the Buddhists, the Christians, the Jews, in the ancient heart of all of their traditions, learned to renounce the [orgasm](#), restrain the energy, and transform it, and to later, enter into marriage, and continue the same restraint.

A single person, harnessing that force, awakens [Consciousness](#). That is why in all the authentic schools in the past, at the beginning levels of spirituality, the people worked as singles in preparation. They would then awaken, and develop powers, but as singles, without sex. They were preparing themselves and awakening their [Consciousness](#). When they were prepared, when their teacher knew, firstly, that the student was awake, secondly that the student could handle it, the student would then be introduced to their spouse and be married. Marriage is a sacred act (sacrament). It is a religious function for the soul. That is why it is so shrouded in mysticism and beauty. It is not about money. It is about religion. It always has been, and it always will be. The two souls become one. They become Elohim, male-female joined. One flesh. That one flesh creates as the gods do if they know how to manage the energy. To restrain it, to purify it, to make it an offering to the divine. To sacrifice lust. Lust is killed, and born from that is beauty, love.

Soma, Ambrosia

That rice milk in Sanskrit is called Soma, and if you have ever studied the Vedas, you know that Soma is hugely important in ancient Indian culture and scripture. The Buddha Shakyamuni came to clarify the Vedas and other scriptures, not invalidate them, so Buddhists should know what they Vedas teach. The word Soma means "extract, nectar, moon, wind, water, air, ether, rice water, rice gruel, heaven, and sky." I have already told you that in the Bible, heaven is the [Hebrew](#) word "Schamayim," which is the "fire-water" of the Divine Mother, which is the upper Eden. It is [Daath](#). It is the superior levels of life and existence. So, when Sujata provides that to the Buddha, she is providing him access to the Divine Mother, the powers of the Divine Mother, the essence of the Divine Mother, which is hidden in our sexual energy.



The Schamayim of the Bible is also here in the Sanskrit Vedas:

“AGNI [fire] and Soma [sexual waters], mighty Pair, graciously hearken to my call,
Accept in friendly wise my hymn, and prosper him who offers gifts.
The man who honours you to-day, Agni and Soma, with this hymn,
Bestow on him heroic strength [willpower], increase of kine, and noble steeds.
The man who offers holy oil and burnt oblations unto you,
Agni and Soma, shall enjoy great strength [willpower], with offspring [spiritual birth], all his life.
Agni and Soma, famed is your prowess wherewith ye stole the kine, his food, from Pani [the [ego](#)].
Ye caused the brood of Bṛsaya to perish; ye found the light, the single light for many.
Agni and Soma, joined in operation ye have set up the shining lights in heaven [[Hebrew](#) :
schamayim].” - Rig Veda

All of this symbolizes ancient secret teachings about sexual transmutation.

All life is made possible by a mother. All physical living things came from a mother. Spiritually, as well, this principle applies. The Divine Mother needs the forces to be at work in us in order for her to create a Buddha in us. Those forces are hidden in our sexual matter. The sexual matter, when it is transformed, when it is purified, becomes Soma. In the Bible, it is called the oil or water. The first miracle of Jesus is when he goes to a wedding and transmutes waer into wine. Read [John 2: His First Miracle is Sexual](#). That is Soma.

Nowadays, when people study scriptures and mysticism, they interpret Soma to be a drug. They believe that Soma was a plant that people used to take to get high. That is because that is the level of mentality of people nowadays. They only think in things like that. They have no concept of the reality. The reality of Soma was hidden precisely because we have a mentality that only thinks in degeneration. Soma is not a plant, or a drug, Soma is sexual energy. We are the plant. We are a [Tree of Life](#), a seed that can grow if we know how to extract the juice. If you study Hinduism and the Vedas, specifically in the Rigveda, you find many prayers, scriptures, and beautiful songs about Soma, and Soma is always described as being created by pressing stones.

“THOU, Soma, hast a running stream, joyous, most strong at sacrifice:
Flow bounteously bestowing wealth.

Effused as cheerer of the men, flowing best gladdener, thou art

A Prince to Indra with thy juice.

Poured forth by pressing-stones, do thou with loud roar send us in a stream

Most excellent illustrious might.” - Rig Veda

Do you know where our stones are? The stones are the testicles and the ovaries. When you press the stones together, you extract the sexual energy if you are practicing [Alchemy](#). [Tantra](#). If you are not, you waste it through the [orgasm](#), through animal lust. If you extract it, you acquire the power for your Divine Mother to create in you.

It is also the power to conquer the ego, desire, lust, the mind. This is how the Buddha goes on to reach enlightenment: by means of what Sujata brings him.

“PRIESTS, offer to the Lord of all the people the milked-out stalk of Soma, radiant-coloured. No wild-bull knows his drinking-place like Indra [Zeus-Jupiter, our Innermost] who ever seeks him who hath pressed the Soma,

Thou dost desire to drink, each day that passes, the pleasant food which thou hast had aforetime, O Indra, gratified in heart and spirit, drink eagerly the Soma set before thee [which we have transmuted and offered up to you].

Thou, newly-born, for strength didst drink the Soma; the Mother told thee of thy future greatness.

O Indra, thou hast filled mid-air's wide region, and given the Gods by battle room and freedom.

When thou hast urged the arrogant [egos] to combat, proud in their strength of arm, we [the husband and wife] will subdue them.

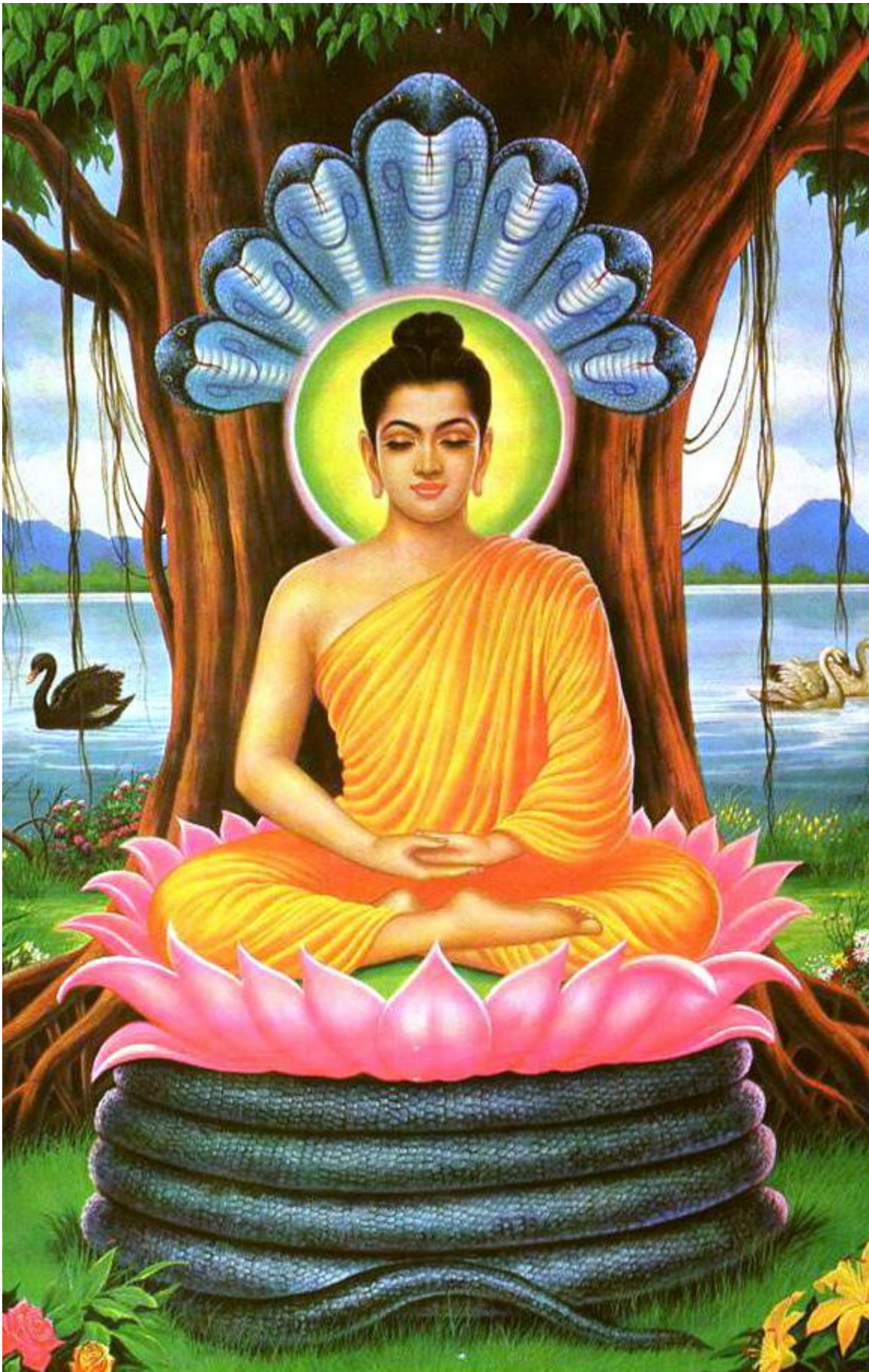
Or, Indra, when thou fightest girt by heroes, we [the husband and wife] in the glorious fray with thee will conquer [ourselves].” - Rig Veda

So, the Soma, transmuted sexual energy, gives spiritual strength, the life-giving power of spiritual birth, and also provides the fire to destroy impurities.

In the Rig Veda, it says,

"Oh Soma, these seven rivers flow as being thine to give command the streams of milk run forth to thee."

The milk that Sujata gives "flows through seven rivers."



Here, we see the Buddha sitting on a coiled serpent with seven serpents risen over his head. This is another symbol in Buddhism that you will not find explained because it has always been hidden and protected knowledge. The seven serpents represent the forces of the Divine Mother awakened and arisen in the seven bodies.

In the garden of Eden, a serpent tempts Adam and Eve. That serpent represents the power of nature, which is the Divine Mother's power, which is why Athena, has as her aide a serpent. Her antithesis is Medusa, who has many serpents on her head. Those are our defects, our egos. The hero has to behead Medusa, to kill the dragon, the devil and deliver the head to Athena, the Divine Mother.



That is, Medusa has to be sacrificed, and from that death, there is a birth. From the death of Medusa, the Divine Mother emerges greater, more beautiful, more glorious. That is why Athena wears the skin of Medusa. It sounds gross, but it is symbolic of how those forces are channelled in us in order to create the soul.

Those who work as a couple, who pass through the probationary levels of spiritual development, under the guidance of their Divine Mothers, and satisfying all of the requirements kept by divinity in order to protect us, can be granted entrance into degrees of initiation. In other words, the word initiate means “to begin.” To be born.

To be Born

The couple can enter into degrees of birth. There are seven primary degrees of importance. That is why those seven serpents are there above the Buddha. Each degree is a serpent because it is a burning fire that makes the sounds of a serpent when it burns. That sound is an energy that is vibrating in nature. It is the force and energy of the Divine Mother. It is her very creative power. She does not grant it lightly. She does not give it on a whim. She does not give it because you paid somebody money, she does not give it because you read a book. She gives it to her children who have proven they are worthy. They are responsible. They will use it wisely, and in her name, for her glory, for her work. That fire is called [Kundalini](#). In Tibetan Buddhism it is called Candali. It is also called Tummo. In the West, it is called the Fire of the Pentecost, which emerged out of the heads of the apostles in the Book of Acts. It is also called Quetzalcoatl in the Aztec mysteries. That is a serpent of fire hidden in the book of numbers that Moses by the guidance of [God](#), raised upon a staff, to heal those who are suffering the bites of the fallen serpents ([Numbers twenty-one in the Bible](#)). Two serpents. One fallen, and one divine. Two Divine Mothers. One fallen, one divine. It is the same force, polarized. Those who earn it can restore the Divine Mother to her glory. Killing Medusa, elevating Athena, raising the [Kundalini](#). First, in the physical body, second in the vital body, third in the [Astral body](#), fourth the mental, fifth the causal, the sixth and the seven are not fallen. The sixth and the seventh belong to our Innermost. They did not fall when we left Eden.

The seven serpents above the head of the Buddha are these seven lower sephirah on the [Tree of Life](#). Now you notice that the image of Buddha sitting beneath the ficus tree, that is [Daath](#), the [Tree of Knowledge](#). The Buddha sits below that tree. Here are the seven serpents below that tree. The Buddha is our Innermost. So you see, Buddhism, [Kabbalah](#), Christianity, are all the same thing taught with different words.

This is how one is born again.

1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from [God](#): for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except [God](#) be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of [God](#).

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water [sex] and of the [Holy] Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of [God](#).

6 That which is born of the flesh [through common sex] is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit [through immaculate sexuality, as required in Leviticus 15] is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again [for everything that exists is born of sex, so must the soul be. Remember Luke 21:19: "With patience shall ye possess thy souls."]

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit [the results of sacred sex are not always visible physically].

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? [See what he should have known in our section on Judaism].

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

The mother, the womb, is not physical. It is our Divine Mother. She gives birth to us, spiritually, internally. That birth happens by a process that is long and slow, not easy, not given freely. It is earned. It happens in very slow steps.

Each initiation is a long process of being tested, purified, making great sacrifices, dying, and being born: the three factors in constant motion. The Wheel of Becoming is in constant motion, but raising one's level of being step by step.

Each serpent is a set of thirty-three stages that correspond to the vertebrae of our spinal column. That is the rod that Moses raised the serpent upon to heal the Israelites. That rod is your spine. That is why the lifespan of Jesus has thirty-three years. Those thirty-three degrees represent the stages of development, processes in which we are tested by our Divine Mother to see if we are worthy to receive her power.

Each step is earned through the merits of our heart. What does the mother want from her child? The mother doesn't want her child to be a murderer, to be a liar, a thief, or a fornicator. A mother wants her child to be beautiful, radiant, happy... We are not happy... We are in misery. We only want money, sex, and power. The Divine Mother does not reward that. She does not reward ambition, pride, or envy. She rewards humility, conscious love, happiness for others, altruism, generosity, diligence. She rewards us when we prove through our actions, physically, emotionally, mentally, that we deserve to have her blessing so that we can act with even more power for the greater good.

You see, the gift of the [Kundalini](#) not only gives us spiritual birth, but it give her a way to work in the world. It gives her a way to help her other children. The [Kundalini](#) is her fabric, her force, her energy, her creative power: the power of the mother is to give life. She will not grant that to those who only want pain, death, destruction, who only want to take for themselves. She does not reward idolaters, adulterers, thieves, or murderers. When you go out and read books about the awakening of [Kundalini](#), they say "do this mantra, and do that [Yoga](#) , and pay this amount of money, and go out to a workshop and have sex with a bunch of people," but they are lying. They will awaken energy within you, but the fallen aspect of the Divine Mother, the inverted energy which we call, Kundabuffer. It is the tail of Satan, the tail of the demon. You will awaken powers, you will awaken [Consciousness](#), you will develop the ability to be awake out of your body, you will develop chakras, you will have power over others, but you will be a demon, awakened. You will be cursed. You will suffer...

Karma cannot be avoided. If you create pain, you will experience pain. The Divine Mother, to awaken a Buddha, demands that the causes of pain and suffering are removed from us. That means it is a slow process in which we must eliminate our [ego](#). We must die to be born. We must sacrifice ourselves, psychologically, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally in order to be born again, new, clean, pure. Awakened. It does not come over night, it does not come in two weeks. Some people say,

"If you come to our course, we will awaken your [Kundalini](#) and you will have your [Astral body](#) in six months!" They are liars. They cannot command the Divine Mother. She gives the [Kundalini](#). She creates the internal bodies; no one else. She gives it in accordance with our works, not our money, not which school we go to, not which master we claim to follow. She gives it according to our earning of it. She is very demanding, but she also loves us very much. If we achieve it, we will be born again as Buddhas, as someone who has gone beyond all coming and going, someone who is liberated from the wheel of Samsara and Nirvana: the Wheel of Becoming.



This final image shows a fully awakened Buddha in the pure lands. Of course, probably most Westerners would not experience the heavens as looking like China, but nevertheless, it represents something significant. Through the process of these three factors, we can create something new: a new

level of being. We can become Buddhas. Fully awake. Free from suffering. From that place, we are then well prepared to help others do the same, but not until then.

Questions and Answers

Audience: When you talk about how the sixth and the seventh serpents were not fallen that even someone who takes the spiral path gets those serpents?

Instructor: That is right. The sixth and seventh serpents belong to the Being; they relate to Buddhi and Atman ([Geburah](#) and [Chesed](#)), thus those aspects of the Being never fell. That is in every creature, so that part of the Being is always preserved.

A question submitted by a student: I was confused by what you said about the sixth and seventh serpents. Here's a quote from [The Three Mountains](#), chapter XVII, the Fifth Initiation of Fire. Samael is in dialogue with his Divine Mother:

Question: "Oh, Mother of mine! Have I already lifted the five serpents?"

Answer: "Yes, my son!"

Question: "I want you to help me raise the sixth and seventh serpents."

Answer: "You already have those raised."

In those instants, a perfect remembrance of myself emerged from within me.

Question: "Ah! I am an ancient Master. I was fallen. Now I remember."

Answer: "Yes my son, you are a Master."

The way I read that passage, it seemed to imply that Samael in particular did not have to raise the sixth and seventh serpents because he had raised them before, and they never fall. However, someone who was not previously a master would have to raise them during the course of their initiations (i.e. not everyone has them raised).

Instructor: This is an interesting question, with an interesting answer.

Firstly, one has to remember that the [Kundalini](#) is the power of the Divine Mother that provides a direct connection to Her. Where the [Kundalini](#) abides, She abides. The Innermost is the child of the Divine Mother. He has Her power: the [Kundalini](#). His feminine soul also has the power of the Divine Mother. This is true in every being, at every level: [Chesed](#) and [Geburah](#) are always alight with [Kundalini](#). If there were no [Kundalini](#) in [Chesed](#) or [Geburah](#), there would be no Innermost or Divine Soul.

As you know, the human soul is different. It can rise or fall. Obviously, a human soul who rises (alighting the [Kundalini](#)) and then falls, loses the fire.

Let us consider what happens to a soul who has risen before, but then descends again willingly—not by falling (breaking the law) but descending to do the work again with the blessings of [God](#). In such a case, how will that soul raise the serpents again, if they are not fallen? The fire is still risen, yet the soul has to begin again at the bottom. How is this possible? Clearly, it makes sense that in such a case, the [Kundalini](#) remains arisen, yet the soul still must ascend the steps of each initiation. Obviously, it will not be difficult. The fire will already be awakened. The soul merely has to pass the relevant ordeals, acquire the needed comprehension, and satisfy the various requirements.

Using this example, we can understand the sixth and seventh serpents. They never fall. Whether we are a beginner or a fallen Master, when reaching this level of the work there are steps that one must perform in relation to the sixth and seventh serpents, but their fire is not fallen.

Audience: You said that there were two definitions of Maya, and that there is the older one, and then the newer one of illusion. Would you say that the later one that we know is the Veil of Isis as opposed to the true Maya?

Instructor: That is right. So the relatively newer interpretation of Maya relates to that Veil of Isis, as illusion. In the Egyptian tradition it states that Isis says, "No mortal has ever lifted my veil," and that veil is precisely the veil of separateness that all of us exist within. Because we are mortal, meaning we exist in lunar bodies, not just the physical body, but the psychological body that we have, we belong to nature in that context. The Divine Mother, the lunar aspect, has provided us with lunar bodies. Not just the physical body, but the astral and mental bodies as well. That is our mortal body. It is subject to "becoming." Because of that, we have this illusion that we are separate; that I am different than you, and that you are different from me, and things are different from me. That is an illusion. It is not real. Someone who awakens, that is one of the first things they begin to understand, and that is what is represented in the [Tree of Life](#). In the higher levels, that illusion ceases to be present and you see the reality that everything is interrelated, interpenetrating, interdependent. That is what the outer ring of the wheel represents: interdependence.

The Veil of Isis is torn when one develops the soul, is no longer mortal, and at those levels, one is no longer subject to that veil, the Maya. One then sees the truth, reality. The reality is the Absolute. That

is why we used the term in the previous lecture, Prajna. Prajna is penetrating wisdom, discriminating wisdom that sees through the veil. It tears it and sees the reality. That veil is the body, the matrix, or the fabric of nature, which is Maya, the Divine Mother. When you pierce that, you see the Divine Mother herself. Reality. That interdependence of all things and that absolute that sustains it. That is awakening. Intellectually, it does not make a lot of sense. It is a conscious thing. It is a cognizant experience that shows that the way we perceive is a dream. It is not real. You can only know that when you have woken up.

So one has to strive continually to change how one perceives and to meditate and meditate and meditate and meditate so that the [Consciousness](#) becomes strengthened. Stronger, and stronger, and stronger, until it has the capability to perceive without hesitation and without pause. It is the ability to sustain presence, to be continually here and now in constant observation without distraction. It gives you the ability to start to penetrate that, but it is only with the development of the soul, the serpents of the [Kundalini](#), that the power is fully focused.

What that means is that the singles the ones that don't develop the soul, can develop that power to a certain degree. They can develop insight into nature and how it functions, but the only way to fully break the Wheel of Becoming in one's self and become fully liberated is to develop the soul. To raise the seven serpents, create the solar bodies, and get off the wheel. It is a long process. When you study the philosophy of these traditions that analyze the nature of emptiness, you will see a great difference and you can see that part of that is the level of instruction and training that the writer of the scripture or the teacher of the scripture had.

Audience: How do we see the roots of the [ego](#) which reside in the fifth dimension?

Instructor: First of all, we have to understand that everything is multidimensional. What we are experiencing here and now, we call this the third dimension. Physicality. What we are experiencing here and now, is the collection of all of these other dimensions into this moment. Even though we cannot directly see the fifth dimension here, we can infer it. What we talk about as the fifth dimension is eternity, it is an existence that is beyond this third dimension, it is a level in which time functions in a different way, it has matter, it has energy, and we experience it when we are dreaming. Physically, we sometimes perceive and experience dreaming and we daydream. Probably everybody in this lecture daydreamed. I am not going to point at anybody specific, but during the lecture I did see some people spaced out. When you are spaced out, you are daydreaming. You are not here and now. You were tasting the fifth dimension. You were inferring it's existence. You may not call it that, you call it a daydream. You were dreaming about what you are going to eat as soon as I stopped talking. Whatever it was that you had in your mind to eat or drink or go to the bathroom, you were seeing those images and projecting those images. Those images are reflected into the brain, but where they emerge from is the fifth dimension. When you dream at night, you go there. Your [Consciousness](#) goes there.

From the third dimensional point of view, that is part of why we learn to meditate. To suspend the physical senses, to shut them off, to close all the physical senses and to look within. Awake.

Conscious, not dreaming, awake. To open up our inner eye. The same way you daydream, the same way you think about that beautiful lunch you are going to have, you do that with [Meditation](#), but not about lunch. Then you are analyzing whatever [ego](#) it is that is bothering you or that you need to work on so if you experience something related with envy, you would visualize what happened with precision, what did you see, hear, say, what happened, what were the circumstances, what was that environment, you remember it, you project the image, you visualize it. That is the beginning of the [Meditation](#). That is your access to the fifth dimension. As you develop that skill, it is no longer a matter of projecting the memory, projecting what happens, you then just relax, close your eyes, shut your senses down, concentrate, meditate, and then all of the sudden, those images come spontaneously, the same way it happens when you are asleep at night, but consciously. [Meditation](#) will be like that when you meditate properly. The images will come and you just sit, observe, and learn. That is how you access the fifth dimension. It is in that place that you can enter into the deepest roots of the [ego](#) and eliminate a lot of the problems. Now, going deeper, there are aspect related to the [ego](#), hidden deep in the psyche that for you to fully work on them as a single person, you will not have the ability to transform enough energy to eliminate them. These are deep, crystallized, hardened, condensations in the mind. To destroy those things, you need a solar body. Not the lunar body that we have now, psychological body, but a solar one that can transform and direct much more energy. That is another reason why we need to raise the [Kundalini](#) and create the soul, because to get at the roots of the [ego](#) and to fully eliminate it, we need that level of work.

Audience: At what point is the second birth?

Instructor: The second birth is a process. It is not one thing.

We can state that as soon as you begin transmutation, that is, as soon as you renounce the [orgasm](#), you begin to transform your sexual energy, whether you are single or in a couple you begin the process of the second birth, at that instant, because you begin to conserve and protect the most sacred energy you have access too and no longer corrupt it with your desire. That initiates the process and if you do not do that, there will be no birth, so you can say that the beginning of transmutation is the beginning of your birth.

Birth itself is a series of initiations. Initiation mean to begin. To initiate. It is a long process. I talked about seven fundamental initiations, but there are more.

True spiritual birth, the real spiritual birth, is something else that I did not address today because we ran out of time. When we create the solar bodies and the [Kundalini](#) is being awakened in us, that is a birth, but it is only setting the stage for when Christ is born within us. That is only possible for those who enter into the path of the [bodhisattva](#), the direct path. That happens only at the completion of the initiation of [Tiphereth](#), the fifth initiation of major mysteries, and even that birth is a beginning, because that birth is the beginning of the full development of the [bodhisattva](#), so the [bodhisattva](#) when it is fully developed, is the end of the second mountain related with the Nirmanakaya, the sephirah [Binah](#), with resurrection. With Resurrection, we die. We sacrifice everything including our body and we die. Then, we are born as a resurrected master. That is a complete spiritual birth.

Audience: How do we increase our will for spiritual birth?

Instructor: Study karma relentlessly Study cause and effect in yourself and in other people in the world. Study suffering everyday. Study how much people suffer and why. Do not blame others, the governments, corporations, or religions, but look at how each individual person, city, state, country, and continent create their own suffering because of their own idiosyncrasies. Study that in relation with yourself and see how you are doing it, too. Firstly, to understand how this law functions, secondly, so that we stop blaming everyone else, thirdly, so we see that the responsibility lies from within. From that, spontaneously will emerge enormous will to awaken. To stop creating suffering, and also to help others. The only way to achieve that help is to be born spiritually.

In addition, study death. It is inevitable. To keep repeating birth and death is exhausting, painful. It can be transcending through spiritual birth. One can leave the wheel.

Finally, study all of this in relation with all existing beings. When you comprehend how much pain and suffering is happening in each moment, you feel a spontaneous, sincere urgency to rise up and help others rise out of it, too. Compassion for others is the fuel that powers the [bodhisattva](#).

Audience: Is their a prayer or something we can use to call upon our Divine Mother to help us?

Instructor: Yes. Say, "Mother, please help me." As a child, you do not need to learn certain words to call for your mother's help, you simply call for her. The same thing is true spiritually. Your mother is never separate from you. Everything that you are, she is in that. She is in you, with you, of you, and you of her. Always. Meditate on her, talk to her, call upon her. Those who do not believe in her, do not believe in this, open your mind. Cast out that foolish notion that the Divine Mother is a physical-bodied person. She is not. She is the intelligence that gave rise to everything that exists. She is far beyond our puny concepts. She is the embodiment of all of the compassion and love in the universe. She is love of a level that we can scarcely understand. She is pure love. Call upon her.

If your mind is so focused or so in need, there is also a mantra you can use. It is a very famous mantra, it is the second most popular mantra in Tibetan Buddhism and I will say it so that you can learn it, study it, and use it. It is very powerful, it is,

Om Tare Tuttare Ture Soha

That is the mantra of Tara, the Divine Mother. It is extremely powerful. It calls her immediately. She does not need that. You need that. She is the Divine Mother. She does not need Mantras. She knows everything that is going on with you in every moment for all eternity. The instant you feel the longing for her, she is there. She does not need you to call her. She is not like your physical mom. She is your real mother. Your Divine Mother. She is always aware of you even when you forget about her.

Audience: How often should we transmute our energy in order for our practice to bear fruit?

Instructor: Transmutation is a highly individual effort. Each of us has our own idiosyncrasy in how the energy flows through us, which is determined by our Karma, our age, and by our health. Truthfully, we should be in a constant process of transmutation. If you are really observing yourself, remembering yourself, you should constantly be transmuting energy. This is the basis of the transformation of impressions. That is a transmutation. The word transmutation means "to change thoroughly." Everything that you see, hear, think, and feel should be a transmutation of something impure into something pure. You can transmute all day long, simply by maintaining the right bhava, state of mind. Transmutation does not strictly depend upon particular exercises, it depends on a state of being.

With that said, there are exercises that are more focused for transmutation for singles; we have exercises like runes and pranayama. For couples we have Sahaja [Maithuna](#), [Sexual Magic](#). Couples should only practice sexual cooperation, at most, once per day. Most couples probably will not do that much. We have what is called a creative magnetic pause. This is a natural cycle of how the energy rises and falls like the waves in the ocean. Every couple will have their own rhythm according to their temperature, sexually speaking. Couples who run hot will have the sexual act more often. It could be once a day at the most. Couples who are warm, will be less often. It could be once a week. Couples who are cool, will be even less often. Once every two weeks or once every month. It depends, but it should be natural, not forced. It should be spontaneous, dictated by the heart. By love. By true emotional, spiritual, mental, and willful intimacy. Not because we have been told that we have to practice every day. If you do that, you will kill your marriage, and I can guarantee that, because I have witnessed it. I have observed instructors and students in relationships who assumed upon themselves that demand to practice [Sexual Magic](#) every day. They ended in divorce, because they were breaking their own creative magnetic pause. They were going against their own spontaneous, natural energies. Respect yourself, respect your spouse, respect your Divine Mother, learn to work in harmony with nature.

Audience: What does an active imagination have to do with sexual energy and is it a door into the psyche?

Instructor: Imagination is the ability to see. We use our imagination when we daydream. When someone tells you, "I need you to go do this and that," you imagine it. So for example, the wife says, "Go to the store and get me this thing and this thing and this thing." The husband, in his mind has to see the pictures of each element he has to get or else he will not remember. That is imagination. In [Meditation](#), we do the same thing. We actively imagine what we need to see.

If we have abused our sexual energy, depleted our sexual energy, our imagination will be very weak. Sexual energy is the very fundamental energy that feeds our imaginative ability. Imagination is the power of the pineal gland to project imagery. The pineal gland is in charge of the sexual organs. The pineal gland regulates the flow of the endocrine system. The pineal gland controls and is nourished by the sexual forces. When we have depleted our sexual energy, the pineal gland atrophies. It weakens. We no longer can see. This is partly why the beginners in religion had to learn [Chastity](#): to retain the sexual energy so the pineal gland becomes very strong so they can see in [Meditation](#). So they can awaken and develop the power to see into the astral world. This is part of the reason. So your imagination is directly connected to your sexual forces.

Those who restrain the sexual energy and transform it have a very powerful imagination and that is why we see amongst the greatest artists in history, they knew how to transmute their sexual energy. Wagner, Beethoven, Mozart, da Vinci, all of those great artists transmuted their sexual energy. They all knew this. Not all of them were perfect initiates, but they knew something of it.

If you want a good, strong imagination, transmute your energy.

Audience: What is the relationship between Samsara and Nature? Is there a Hierarchy?

Instructor: In the previous lectures, we explained that Samsara means "circling." Samsara is a psychological state, not a place. It is a level of being. We are in Samsara because of our level of being. We are in nature as well because of our level of being but we do not have to be in Samsara. That is choice. If we change our level of being, if we change our perception and behavior, we can get out of Samsara. We can cut through the circling, which means to achieve Nirvana, which means "ending." So the relationship between Samsara and Nirvana is that we put Samsara in motion through our attitude (bhava), and we escape it by changing our bhava.

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Bhavachakra, the Wheel of Becoming, a Free Online Course

Mystical Death

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- [Death](#)

This is a transcription of a lecture originally given live and unscripted on Gnostic Radio. You can download the audio lecture for free here: [Bhavachakra 07 Mystical Death - AUDIO](#). There is also an accompanying pdf: [Bhavachakra 07 Mystical Death - PDF](#).

Today, we will continue our course about the Bhavachakra, which is one of the central symbolic forms in esoteric Buddhism. The Bhavachakra is usually referred to as “the Wheel of Samsara,” but as we explained earlier in this course, that term is not accurate. The word भावचक्र Bhavachakra means “the Wheel of Becoming.” This wheel symbolizes how all things move through cycles in nature. The word भाव bhava means “becoming.” It also means “a state of being.”

As we explained in this course, we have our own bhava, and this state of being or level of being is constantly changing in accordance with our behavior, not our intentions, and not our wishes, not even our prayer. Our state of being, our level of being, changes by how we act, not just physically, but emotionally and mentally as well. Every atom of energy that we utilize is putting our own “wheel of becoming” in motion. It is the wheel of our mind, the wheel of our [Consciousness](#). We ourselves are a Bhavachakra. This is our fundamental interest in this symbol.

In the previous two lectures, we described for you three fundamental factors that help us to direct the spinning of that wheel, the movement of that wheel — in other words, the movement of our psyche. Those three factors are really one factor; they are united. They are the synthesis of our behavior. The first of the three that we discussed was sacrifice. The second was birth. Today we will talk about death. The factor of death we are going to describe is not physical death. From the perspective of the bigger picture of existence, physical death is no more important than when we go to sleep at night. From the point of view of the big picture, when we go to sleep at night, it is just a little mark on the long trajectory from our experience. Seen from a wider perspective, observing the course of your life, you realize that each death that you experience is exactly the same as sleeping at night; it is a change from one experience to another. There is an ending and a beginning. Physically speaking, death is important in the context that it provides a doorway that you can utilize if you know how. Last year we gave a course about physical death. Today's lecture is about psychological death, which is more important. Psychological death, or mystical death, is far more impactful on the trajectory of your [Consciousness](#) and your experience of being alive than physical death is. Physical death is a change of physical state. Psychological death is a change spiritually, psychologically. This is why it is more important. The psychological and spiritual last beyond physical death. Thus, they are more important.

In the Christian Bible, in the New Testament it says in Corinthians:

“That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.” - 1 Corinthians 15

This statement underscores how important the factor of death is in our spirituality. It underscores how mistaken modern so-called “spiritual” people have become, because all of them steadfastly avoid the subject of death. People nowadays in religion and spirituality are very uncomfortable with the notion of death, and completely avoid it. The truth is that death is the door to liberation. Yet remember: we are talking about psychological death, not physical death.

Of the three factors — which I remind you are united as one — the aspect of spiritual work that is most impactful on our experience from moment to moment is the factor of death. Unfortunately, most spiritual groups focus on service or sacrifice, or on birth, on having ecstasy, and having great emotional highs, without realizing that those experiences are impossible if death does not occur first: the death of the old, the death of the impure, the death of the lie.

This statement from Corinthians provides us a theme within which we can explore our inner Bhavachakra.

The Wheel of Becoming is symbolized in Buddhism as a great cosmic structure in the grip of a terrifying being. As we mentioned, most groups study this at the most superficial level, as how it relates to physical and inter-dimensional existence. This level of importance is useful, and applies to

our spiritual pursuit, and is necessary to know. However, if you really want change, and you want liberation from suffering, and you want to know something about reality, you have to understand the Bhavachakra is a symbol of your own mind. It is your state of being right now. Your state of experience is mapped on this symbol. The previous lectures we have given have explained the many details of that.

Our Sense of Self

Today, we are going to focus on the creature that holds the wheel. His name is Yama. He looks quite terrifying, depicted in a wrathful form with fangs and claws, and three all-seeing eyes, and five skulls upon his crown. In his grip is the whole of Maya — the phenomenal world, manifested existence — and in that cycling of manifested things we find all beings: the gods, demi-gods, humans, animals, hungry spirits, and those trapped in the hell realms. That is what you learn when you study the superficial, introductory aspect of the bhavachakra: the external meaning. It is necessary, but it is not the whole meaning.



Internally, the six realms represent six aspects of our psyche. There are six different types of psychological phenomena that are constantly vying for supremacy within us. Psychologically speaking, we are a chaos. We are constantly contradicting ourselves. From one moment to the next, different psychological entities attempt to take control of our inner wheel and turn it to their own advantage.

In some moments, it is entities that are defined by a strong sense of pride, me: "I deserve, I want, I am." This is a sense of self, defined by comparison with others. That sense of self feels inferior or superior depending on its own idiosyncrasies. It is pride, shame, vanity. Pride corresponds to the levels of the so-called "gods," those that consider themselves superior, those who consider themselves powerful.

We all have a huge diversity of entities in our minds that emerge in different ways, and different times, depending on our experience from day to day. We have entities of anger, envy, fear, lust, resentment, gluttony, greed, and jealousy. We have uncountable number of different "I's," kleshas, samskaras,

aggregates, defects, egos — different elements in our psyche that feel like “me.” Each one has its own emotions, thoughts and impulses to act. Sometimes they seem quite beneficial, loving, humble, when secretly they are deeply envious or seeking revenge.

Currently, amongst all of us, our bhava, our state of being, is extremely subjective, deeply asleep. We lack any real perception of the truth. We do not know ourselves, but we think we do. We think we are awake. We think we know what we are and who we are, when in fact the totality of our sense of self is self-propagated lies. It is an illusion that we ourselves have made, built out of our traumas and desires. We fight tooth and nail to protect our beloved “sense of self.” We love our sufferings, and love to talk about them, to get sympathy for them. They are the very core of our “sense of self.” We cannot imagine what would happen if we were to lose this “sense of self,” of “me, who I am.”

When we encounter the genuine dharma, the real teachings, we become terrified. The teachings state that the sense of self is the cause of suffering for ourselves and for those we love, thus that sense of self must die. When we hear that teaching, we run in terror. We seek any kind of evasion, and do everything we can to preserve our precious “sense of self.”

Really, this is understandable, because we don’t know anything else. We know our cage, we know our little name, and our set of resentments, and our long list of grievances, but we do not know the truth. We do not know who we really are. We can scarcely remember what happened last week or last month, thus we have no clue about our previous existences.

We have no concept of who our real Being is, our true inner Being, which is utterly without pride, completely without anger, absolutely free of doubt or fear. It is pure serenity. It is a deep, abiding love. We have become so engaged in our fear, pride, and lust that we cannot even imagine life outside of the cage. That is why many students ask, “When the [ego](#) is removed, there must be nothing, no self, no existence, it must be boring!” This mistaken concept reflects how deeply hypnotized we are by the [ego](#), and how convinced we are that the [ego](#) is our very self. Yet, it is a mistaken view. Our true nature is not the [ego](#). We have a genuine reality hidden inside, a true nature, a manner of being that is utterly without flaw — yet none of us remember it, because we have been in our self-made cage for so long. When someone shows us how to break the lock of our cage, we say, “No, no, no, no. I am just going to hang spiritual pictures on the walls of my cage. I don’t want out.”

The real Dharma teaches us how to break the cage, but it takes courage. A lot of courage. It is not easy. To break the cage requires very specific training, very specific knowledge, and a great deal of willpower. Primarily, it requires someone who can be self-reliant, and who can put these three factors in motion in themselves continually from moment to moment. A school cannot do that for you. A master cannot do that for you. No [God](#) can do that for you. The Buddha himself cannot pull you out of hell. Only you can pull yourself out. That requires knowing how to put these three factors united in motion continually, without stopping, so that your continual experience and your continual Bhava is moving out, not deeper into hell. Rather, our psychological trajectory has to be kept continually moving up, towards freedom. Right now. Constantly. To do that requires a lot of self-reflection, a lot of self-awareness, a lot of caution, and a lot of energy.

Yama and Maya

So, regarding that creature that holds the wheel, if the wheel is in us, the creature must be in us, too.



Yama यम is a Sanskrit name, and is actually the inverse of the word Maya माया. Most people who have studied [Yoga](#), Hinduism, or Buddhism are familiar with the word Maya, and interpret it immediately as “illusion.” We have explained in the previous lectures that the word Maya is actually the name of the Divine Mother. She is the body of existence. She is the goddess. She is Prakriti. She is Prana. She is Maya, Mary, and Isis. She is nature itself—not physical nature only, but all of the dimensions, all the way to the Absolute, abstract space. Shunyata. Adi Buddha. Samantabhadra. She is all of that. She is the ground from which existence emerges, and she is every particle of existence. We turn her into illusion because of the nature of our cage, the way we grasp the false sense of self. This “me,” this “myself,” causes us to perceive incorrectly. What we see is projected. It is illusion, it is Maya. That is not Her fault, it is our fault. Her form, if she has a form, is simply a mirror. We see in

that mirror what we have made. What we see in life is what we have made of it. Everything we perceive through our eyes, ears, tongue, nose, touch, and mind is an illusion projected by the mind. We can only see what we ourselves are willing to see, what we want to see. This is one of the fundamental arguments of Asian philosophy, one that is grossly misunderstood.

Illusion emerges out of ourselves because of our mistaken tendency to hold fast to a false identity, a psychological concept that we ourselves have crafted over thousand of years. In each new existence, in each body, the “I” takes on a new personality, a new name, a new face, a new body. Nevertheless, inside of that personality is that same set of psychological traumas that continues to deepen its addiction to suffering. We repeat the cycles again and again. We are always blaming others, always blaming [God](#), our spouse, others, our karma, never recognizing that the spinning of the wheel is done by ourselves. In other words, that demonic wrathful creature that grips the wheel is also ourselves. It is our own Satan. It is our own Anti-Christ: the mind. In the Bible, it is call Jezebel, “she who calls herself prophetess.” That is Yama, this creature with the head of the bull. He represents our own mind. So, you see, there is the external meaning, and the internal meaning.

Yama

Directly translated, Yama is usually said to be the [God](#) of death, so he appears in this terrifying aspect. Yet, the word यम Yama itself has a very deep meaning.

The first is that Yama is merely the inverse of Maya, the same mirror. Yama is Maya itself; she and he are the same thing, yet mirrored.

Interestingly, Yama also means “Pluto,” which in the Greek and Roman mysteries is the [God](#) of the underworld.

Yama can mean “crow,” which in the west symbolizes death.

Yama can also mean “restraint, curb, or rein,” which in Hindu [Tantra](#) is the first stage of Patanjali's [Yoga](#) (Raja [Yoga](#)) begins with yama, restraint of the [ego](#): in other words, ethics.

Yama can also mean “charioteer, driver, bridle, self-control, forbearance, self-restraint.”

Thus, we see that Yama has a duality. As the [God](#) of death, Yama stops life, restrains life. But Yama also restrains bad behavior.

Yama can mean “one of a pair, twin, or twin born.” This is a very interesting connotation if you have studied Prometheus. We gave a lecture about Prometheus and Pandora a few months back when we talked about Prometheus and his brother, who are twins, who represent the two faces of Lucifer, the tempter.

Yama can mean “the number 2, couple, pair.” We are going to come back to that.

Also, “Tone of utterance, pitch of the voice. Key.”

At the most basic level, this term Yama is interpreted to mean the [God](#) of death, but if you know the deeper meanings of the word, and you study any asian scriptures, you will discover that if you read Yama with these other meanings in mind, you will start to penetrate the actual meaning of the scripture, not just the version taught to beginners. You will find the reason why the scripture was written, which is to give clues to the psychological work. Those clues not given openly, but hidden in symbols.

Here we see Yama as painted in a typical Buddhist temple.

We need to understand that Yama handles the process of death in us. Yama is part of us; in other words, we have our own Yama, our own lord or [God](#) of death within.

That process of death that our inner Yama manages within us — psychologically speaking — can happen in two ways: mechanically, automatically, or intentionally.

Mechanical Death

The vast majority of beings allow the process of nature to take them automatically. That is probably what all of us are doing as well. In our moment-to-moment existence, we are just suffering and longing for freedom. Perhaps we are making some superficial alterations to our behavior, changing the way we dress or the books we read, but fundamentally, psychologically, we do not change thoroughly. We have the same pride, the same lust and the same envy that we always had. We do not fundamentally change our root problems. In other words, we are being carried by life, rather than controlling it. Everything just happens to us. Life, for us, is mechanically happening, automatically happening. We are being handled mechanically by nature. We are being controlled by our karma, rather than the other way around.

The part of our Innermost Being that is handling our karma has to manage it according to how our Being must move. Our being does not have any dharma to work with, no cosmic money, no capital to pay our debts. That is, we owe karma. We owe many debts, psychologically speaking.

From lifetime, to lifetime we have pursued our desires endlessly — chasing lust, chasing pride, and trying to out do each other; trying to acquire a little bit of physical comfort, but suddenly it is all taken away from us. We die; we are born again, and start the cycle again. All along the way, we repeat the same mechanicity, repeating the same problems, the same mistakes, repeating the same desires, again and again, much as we do now from day to day.

As such, over the course of many lifetimes, we have done very little for any but ourselves. If we analyze our lives now, we can see that is pretty much true. If we look at our day-to-day lives, from today backwards, we find that the vast majority of our thoughts and actions have been about “me, myself, and I.” When we have done a little bit for someone else, it was done when it was convenient, or when it was easy, or when we could get some praise or recognition. We do something for others when we would get something out of it. It is rare to find a moment, even one moment, when we genuinely made a strong sacrifice for someone else, at cost to our self. Yet, sacrifice of others is how we acquire dharma. We explained that in the lecture entitled Sacrifice. To acquire cosmic capital, dharma, the coin with which we can purchase help, liberation, we acquire that through sacrifice, through giving up our desires, through making a sacrifice of our time and energy for others.

Thus, because we lack that dharmic capital we could use to pay our debts, we have to pay mechanically, through the automatic processes of nature, which the whole world is suffering within now: the uncertainty of day to day life, the limited ability we have to guide our lives towards real security and happiness, the complete lack of knowledge of our purpose, our Being, our future... We suffer in many ways, not just physically, by mentally, emotionally, spiritually...

Then, when our debts reach a critical mass, nature — out of compassion, guided by the Divine Mother (Maya) — manifests as Yama, to cleanse us of impurities. That cleansing process is called hell. It is very painful. Yet, that is the mechanical process of nature, a system established by the need to cleanse impurities from nature. Those impurities are in our minds. If they were allowed to continue, the universe would become swallowed by them. Hell is how the divines preserve the opportunity for liberation for us.

Death by Skillful Means

From that point of view we then look at the second way to die, willfully guided by skillful means. This means one makes the choice to cleanse oneself, avoiding hell, and becoming clean psychologically through rigorous change. This is very difficult.

To willfully die by skillful means does not happen by mere intention. It happens when you know how to do it and you do it. Not tomorrow. Not at the retreat, whenever that is, once a year. It happens everyday. This is important to clarify in our minds when we are analyzing our own spiritual life. When we look at our behavior, we have to be objective, impartial, scientific, and ask ourselves, “Am I really making fundamental changes in myself? Am I really conquering my lust, pride, my envy, or am I just fooling myself?” They are not easy questions to answer. If you find them easy to answer, you are fooling yourself; make no mistake. To change in this way is very difficult. Yet, there are unmistakable ways to know when you are successful and we will discuss that.

In one tantric scripture it states:

“The lord of death [Yama] resides in your own heart; your life is being cut short by you, yourself; it is you who drinks the poisonous water—with certainty, beware of this demon!” - Stages of the Heroic Mind

This scripture comes from the tradition of Lo Jong, which is a Tibetan Buddhist tradition that was not available to the public until very recently. This demon is in yourself: Yama.

In another scripture it states:

“We all suffer in this cycle of existence; as I search down to its foundation for the root, I see the king: the thought “I am,” which resides in the palace of my heart in the midst of false conceptions.

“With whom shall I battle, for I am my own enemy? Who will save whom, for I am my own savior? I am my own witness for my actions and inaction. I will be free when I tame my own self.” - The Peacock’s Neutralizing of Poison

This is from another scripture from the same tradition. These scriptures point out that the fundamental existence for psychological change is in our hands. It is not in repeating mantras or doing pilgrimages; it is not in making big donations. Liberation is found by changing psychologically. Sacrifice is

necessary, spiritual birth is necessary, yet neither factor can change us fundamentally if we do not die psychologically.

So, Yama is also our own inner demon, which is not one thing, but a multiplicity with many forms and faces. Remember, Yama is the mirror of Maya. Maya takes many forms. It appears with many faces and many voices. The appearances are just manifestations of our [ego](#), our mind. It is completely inconsistent. It is a constant battle, and it never shuts up.

Anyone who has made the attempt to meditate knows well how difficult it is to tame the mind. And even if you develop some degree of concentration, you still cannot meditate — that is, enter samadhi — because the mind has many levels. It is very deep, and even if on the surface it appears calm, below it is not.

Right now, if we listen to our mind, we will hear a voice that may be repeating what I am saying, or commenting on what I am saying, or trying to talk about something that is completely unrelated, like, “I am hungry; I should have gotten that bagel when I had the chance.” That is not your [Consciousness](#). That is an [ego](#). Those voices in your head are not your Being. They are your egos, and we are hypnotized by that voice. It is constantly chattering all day and all night. How many human beings are making the effort to cut through that chatter and silence it? How many cannot even turn off the radio or the TV because they have become so addicted to the constant noise? I have met people who get in the car and cannot bear the silence, so they blast the radio; they cannot drive without the chattering radio. This is a symptom of their mind. They have become so habituated with the constant chatter of their mind that they want to hear it outside, too. Turn it off. Turn off the radio, turn off the TV, and turn off the computer. When we do that, we start to feel agitated, because it becomes “too quiet.” This illustrates why we cannot meditate: we are addicted to noise and chaos. We cannot even tame our senses physically, nor psychologically, which is harder.

In this passage we see, “As I search down to the foundation for its root I see the king, the thought, “I am,” which resides in the palace of my heart amidst false conceptions.” This thought “I am” is our [ego](#), our false sense of “self.” If you become sincere in the observance of yourself, you will find that this thought continually manifesting in different ways. “I am suffering, I am good, I am bad. I want, I need, give me, give me.” The I am is always there. Do not mistake this I am for the real I Am.

The real “I AM” is the Being, about which Jesus taught when he said, “‘I Am’ the way, the life, and the truth.” That is a different “I Am.” That is the I Am of the Being.

The Being simply is. The Being does not want or lack desire. That I Am is what we need to be watching for.

We need to be a witness of our actions and inactions. We need to learn to see, “for whom I should battle, for I am my own enemy?” You see the question that this raises; if we accept the philosophical concept that “I am Yama, I am my own [God](#) of death. I am the creator of my own suffering. I am the one turning my own Bhavachakra into hell,” then how do I fight against myself? Who is fighting whom? This is the precise conflict that the beginners encounter. Who fights whom? “If I am so much [ego](#), who do I fight that with? How do I fight myself?” This is a difficult, thorny problem when we are asleep, when we don’t have clear vision, when we cannot see clearly, whether outside or inside.

“Who will save whom for I am my own savior?” We have the arrogance to presume that we will save humanity. We believe we will become great masters and [bodhisattvas](#) and save humanity, yet the fact is that as you can see right now in our lives, we cannot even save ourselves. We want to change other people and make them better, but we cannot even make ourselves better. It is a problem, but there is an answer. There is a way.

Yamantaka

This image represents Yamantaka. Looks the same as Yama, right?



Yamantaka

Yamantaka is a wrathful creature with a bull's head, because it is the same creature. Remember I said Yama means twin? Well, Yamantaka is Yama's twin. Yamantaka means "destroyer of Yama." He is also called Yamari, which means the "enemy of Yama." Yamantaka is the antithesis of Yama. These are both parts of our selves. These are parts of us, parts that we do not know about. These are symbolic

images. Each part of this image is symbolic, not literal. Westerners get very freaked out by pictures like this, because they think it is all about “the devil,” which they imagine is some creature in the world. It is about the devil, but our own devil, inside of us. Let me explain what these symbols mean so we do not feel scared.

Yama is a ferocious looking creature with the head of a bull. If you know Egyptian mysticism, you know that Apis is the bull [God](#). Amongst all the ancient traditions the bull represented the Being, such as amongst the Minoans, Cretans, Greeks, Hebrews, Jews, and Egyptians. The bull represents the Father, [Kether](#), Amun-ra, the highest.



Apis

Unfortunately, because we are fallen into disgrace, we take all of the forces that we receive from the Absolute and from our Innermost we invert all of that; we corrupt it. We take all of our energy and utilize it to cause suffering for ourselves and others. We utilize it to feed desire, to feed our materialism. Over a long period of time, we have converted the inner bull Apis into the bull Yama. We have converted our psychological into something animal. We are animals, psychologically speaking. Truthfully, we are worse than animals. Humanity on this planet nowadays behaves worse than the animals do. Animals do not destroy their own food and water. They do not kill randomly, for pleasure or entertainment, like we do; they kill to eat. We kill because we like it. We rape, pillage and destroy because we enjoy it. I know all of us in this room feel offended by that, but most of us watch violent TV, and we enjoy the entertainment of killing. We like it. We do not like studying about virtues. We like watching defects (lust, anger, sarcasm, cruelty) and indulging in those things.

Yama also represents that bull-headed creature within us and represents how the forces of [Kether](#) (Apis, the bull) have fallen into disgrace. That is why Yama is depicted in a ferocious aspect, out of control.

In the myth of Yama, he is said to be a fallen king. Our inner king is [Kether](#), our Innermost, our Being, who has been disgraced because of our current state. So the myth says that Yama the enraged king went around Tibet, killing and rampaging in his enraged state. In order to stop him, another aspect of divinity decided to try to figure out a way to block him in doing this. He had to come up with a smart way of doing that, because Yama is the [God](#) of death taking the very power of the whole wheel — all manifested existence in his claws — in order to kill everything.

To accomplish this, Manjushri — which is an aspect of our Being — decides to use on the very same form as Yama, but multiplied. So, Manjushri manifests as Yamantaka. Where Yama has one head, Yamantaka has many. Where Yama has a few arms (depending on the depiction), Yamantaka has many more. Manjushri comes at Yama as Yama, but more powerful. He terrifies Yama with his own image. In other words, he puts a mirror before Yama's face, and says, “Look at yourself!” Thus, Yama is conquered.



Manjushri, who manifests as Yamantaka

This beautiful myth teaches us how to reach mystical death, how to conquer our own Yama, who controls the Bhavachakra, and turn that power towards liberation.

Vajravetali

In this image we see that Yamantaka is with his consort, who is called Vajravetali. We see [God](#) and goddess, Father and Mother — in other words, an Elohim מִיְהוָה ([Hebrew](#) for “[God](#) and goddess”).

Vajravetali means “indestructible corpse.” A curious term, isn’t it? If you think about it and analyze it, and you meditate on it, the meaning is very beautiful.



Saraswati, who manifests as Vajravetali

Vajravetali is an aspect or manifestation of Saraswati, who is the wife of Brahma, a symbol of the sephirah [Kether](#). Saraswati is the bringer of all good things, the bringer of beauty. In order to aid beings, she can take form as Vajravetali, this wrathful shape; in other words, she is Maya. She is “the corpse,” all things that appear to be alive and real, but fundamentally have no independent existence. All manifested things appear to be real, but ultimately are not. We look at each other and we think we are all real, and we believe what we see will last, but it will not. Each person we become identified with, we look at them, we judge them, and we give them attributes in our mind that we believe are true, yet we fail to realize that we invent it all. We do not know those people at all. Moreover, we do the same with ourselves: we believe many things about ourselves that are not true. We do not know ourselves at all.

We psychologically invent many things, and project them onto people, places and things, all the while assuming it is true and real. In reality, everything is impermanent and will die. We forget that, because we are asleep, hypnotized by the flux of illusion, the body of Maya.

She, the goddess, is the very body of existence: the arising and passing of all things. She is the birth, life, and death of everything. She is “the indestructible corpse.” She is how nature emerges, sustains and passes away. She is the fundamental ground of existence. She is the Vajravetali, the “wife” of Yamantaka; rather, she is the feminine aspect, which means the energy, shakti, the power of Yamantaka. Without her, Yamantaka would be powerless.



Yamantaka and Vajravetali stand upon Yama

Vajravetali is a form used by our Divine Mother. She and Yamantaka symbolize the perception of reality. When you awaken, little by little, you start to penetrate the veil of Isis. No mortal can penetrate the veil of Isis, but an immortal can. What is immortal is your [Consciousness](#), your Tathagatagarbha, your Buddha Nature. It can penetrate the veil. It can see the body of Saraswati / Vajravetali and see that corpse dancing as nature. Nature is beautiful, but impermanent. In that vision you recognize she is an embodiment of love performing her dance to aid us towards liberation, but beings do not recognize that. We become confused. All of that is a manifestation of Manjushri.

Manjushri

This image represents Manjushri. Manjushri is one of the symbolic forms of the Buddhas.

All of these images and names are symbolic forms. Many people fall into the mistake of taking them literally. While they do have a literal existence, so to speak, that is unimportant. What is important is what they represent in our own selves. Manjushri represents the cumulative wisdom of all the awakened beings in existence. Imagine that.

If you are studying any spirituality, to accept it you first must to some degree make an assumption that someone in that tradition achieved its goal, someone escaped suffering and thus they have wisdom, knowledge, of how to do the same. So, if you are a Christian, you accept that there are millions of angels in heaven, with direct knowledge of [God](#). If you are a Buddhist, you accept that there are millions of Buddhas, plus all those on the path towards becoming Buddhas. Thus, imagine all of those awakened beings, and imagine all of their minds as one thing: that is what Manjushri represents: the mind of the Buddhas, all of them united as one intelligence.



So, Manjushri is not one being. Manjushri is the same symbol as Christ: wisdom, in which there is no individuality, but a cosmic unity. When we study Christ, we are not studying a person but an energy. In that energy, there is no I, but there is we. It is a very high level of nature. In that level, which you can call clear light, is profound cognizance that sees reality, that does not become confused by forms, but sees the basis of forms: the truth. Therefore, Manjushri represents discriminative perception. In Sanskrit, that type of perception is called Prajna. We described Prajna in the previous lecture. Prajna is the highest of the paramitas (perfections). Prajna is the ability to see the Absolute, Reality. That kind of perception is indistinguishable from perfect compassion; in other words, the beings who have perfect compassion also have discriminative perception, the ability to see the fundamental reality of all things. That is not theoretical or philosophical, it is actually perceived. All of that together is what Manjushri represents.



In this particular representation, Manjushri has a sword. It is the most common way he is shown. The sword represents the perception that cuts through appearances, cuts through Maya / Yama. Discriminative perception cuts through the “I,” and sees reality. It sees not merely the veil of Isis (nature) — that is, what appears to be real — rather, it sees what truly is real. It cuts the veil: it sees the truth. This is not philosophical, it is not to see the same way you are seeing now, but to see beyond physicality and beyond time, and beyond the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth dimensions, and to see all of them simultaneously, without confusion, and how all of them are rooted in the zero dimension, also called the seventh dimension, which is the Absolute, Shunyata, the Emptiness or Voidness. In other

words, discriminative perception sees the two truths at the same time, without any confusion. Beings with that paramita developed see relative and ultimate reality simultaneously. This is the vision of a well-developed Buddha. That vision comes from awakened [Consciousness](#), not physical attributes, lineage, or any other physical influence.

The myth of Yama described previously explains how the wisdom of the Buddhas, the wisdom of the awakened ones, takes form as Yamantaka to conquer Yama. All of that is within us. Manjushri represents the totality of the wisdom of our own inner Buddha. In other words, this form is inside of us, it is an archetype, a blueprint of what in us needs to develop. Each time we utilize awakened [Consciousness](#), we acquire knowledge: real knowledge. This is not something we read in a book, but something we know through our experience. We learn real knowledge by seeing with [Consciousness](#) awakened, experiencing with [Consciousness](#) awakened, and consciously knowing what we experienced. In that way, we start to approach seeing and recognizing what is real. We acquire cognizance: conscious knowledge. It is called in Sanskrit jna, which is the same as the Greek word gno, of [Gnosis](#) (“knowledge”). So jna is the first part of the Sanskrit word jnana, which means “knowledge.” Both of these words, from Greek and Sanskrit, do not indicate intellectual knowledge or book knowledge; the real meaning is conscious knowledge: that which you acquire from experience. That knowledge from experience is what is represented in the book that is floating on a flower in Manjushri’s hand. That book is the knowledge that our Innermost acquires from the use of discriminative perception, awakened [Consciousness](#) that cuts through illusion to see reality. This is what we need to acquire death, to conquer Yama: we need conscious knowledge.

Acquiring that knowledge is a process. There are stages. It would be great if we could just say, “Sign me up!” and we could get killed and then we are liberated. It does not work like that. Nothing in nature works like that. There is no shortcut or magic pill to reach liberation. Liberation is a result of awakening [Consciousness](#). That is not easy, else we would have already transformed this planet into a paradise. Instead, we have made it into a hell.

Stages of Death

To reach liberation, we need conscious knowledge. To acquire it, the [Consciousness](#) must awaken. To awaken it, first we need to see how it is asleep. For that, we have to learn what are the causes of suffering.

1. Discovery

The first phase of the stages of death is discovery. We have to see for ourselves how we are creating suffering. We have to see our own [ego](#) in action, as it acts, as it works, in our mind, in our heart, and in our body. What it says, what it thinks what it feels. How it acts, what it wants, how it manipulates us, how it takes control of us, what feeds it, what stimulates it, what excites it. We need to know all of that.

Think about it: if you are in a war, and you are facing not only your death but the death of everyone you love, and then you find out there is a traitor, a spy, but you do not know who it is; the war is so close to being lost already, and then there is a traitor, how are you going to catch him? How are you going to find out who it is? You are going to have to watch everybody, equally, without prejudice and without preference, because you do not know who it is. It could be your sister, your brother, your mother, your best friend — you don’t know. So you have no choice: you have to watch everybody, equally, all the time. This is how you have to watch your mind: all of the time watching your thoughts, your feelings, your impulses, your reactions, and study them. Study how they function, how they connect to each other, what causes different things to rise up. What are you wanting, what you avoiding, what are you craving, what are you ignoring, what are you willfully not seeing? You need to learn all of those things, because those are the things that keep you suffering, and keep you in the dark, and have you at the brink of losing the battle, losing the war. Time is short.

This phase of discovery is put in motion through self-observation, through constant observance. Scientific observance, which has no preference or presupposition. I am putting it this way because, as a detective, if you go into the headquarters looking for the traitor, and you already think it is a certain person, you are going to pay so much attention to that person that you are not going to see anyone else. The smart traitors will always make you think it is someone else. Egos are very smart — well, they think they are smart, but they are not as smart as [God](#). They are not as smart as Buddha; they are not as smart as your [Consciousness](#). They can be found out, and they can be conquered, but you have to pay attention; you have to be watching them all of the time.

2. Judgment, Comprehension

Through that process of observance and discovery and gradually we acquire understanding. Little by little we start to put together the pieces of the puzzle. We start to see how they work together, what stimulates them, how do they behave and how they react; what they cause us to do. Little by little, we start to understand it. Here is the important thing: these egos / defects are parts of our own mind. We made them; they have inside of themselves our energy, part of our [Consciousness](#). In order for us to be liberated from suffering, those entities have to die. Yet, you cannot kill it as long as you are inside of it. Makes sense, right? As long as part of you is still inside of that entity, you really cannot kill it; it has to be empty first.

To reach the final stage, execution, you first have to take the [Consciousness](#) out of it. Let us give an example of this. Imagine you become very angry; anger inflames you. It takes over your thinking and your feeling; even your body can become tense. You can sweat, you can become hot, you can feel ready to run and jump and grab somebody and give them a beating, or whatever it is that the anger wants. Your heart will race and pound. Your mind will race with thoughts of “injustice” and planning for revenge and redemption, and exposing the other person so “they will suffer the way I am suffering.” That state, that bhava, shows that you have zero comprehension of that angry entity, because it has inflamed your [three brains](#). You are burning with it. That means you have no comprehension of it, at all. That means that [ego](#) cannot die, because (1) it still has your [Consciousness](#) trapped within it, and (2) you are continuing to feed it and nourishing it with your energy. However, if you study it, and as that event unfolds over hours, days, or weeks, and you work in [Meditation](#) and self-observation to work on understanding that anger — where it is coming from, why it is there, how you have empowered it, and the suffering it causes — little by little its intensity will decrease: thoughts, emotions and physical sensation. They will all reduce, until you observe that the same type of scene happens again, just like the first one that stimulated that anger in the first place, but now when that same event happens again, you do not get angry. You might feel a little kick tempting you to anger, but you do not respond to it. Instead, you realize, “Why should I be angry? I understood this already. I know that I do not need to be angry about this. So that person called me a name? So what? That name only means something if I agree that it means something.” Isn’t that true? If my spouse says I am an idiot, she is right. Why should I be mad at her? I am an idiot; I cannot deny it. But if I get angry, it is because something in me disagrees: that is pride, self-esteem. Now if she says it, and I respond with serenity, and know in myself, “She is right. I did a foolish thing.” Anger is not stimulated. Previously, I would have been angry. Now, having meditated and understood that anger, that pride, the same event no longer causes that old reaction. That means that entity of anger is empty, powerless; it no longer traps my [Consciousness](#). I recognized the truth of it; I comprehended it. I have seen that that anger is nothing. It does not bother me anymore; thus, now that thing can die. I have not fed it, I have not stimulated it, I have not protected it, I have exposed it. I have seen through it. I can see that it is empty, it is nothing, and it can die. That is the process in synthesis how we must approach the process of death, psychologically speaking. Of course, this is in relation with a specific situation, a specific defect stimulated in a specific event. This does not mean that we have comprehended ALL of our anger. If on it were that easy! We have thousands upon thousands of entities in our minds, and they are each different.

Comprehension is not intellectual. All of us know intellectually that we should not do certain things, yet we still do them. Someone who comprehends will never do it, not for any reason. For example, someone who comprehends that smoking is harmful is repelled by smoking, and has not even an atom of attraction towards it. In the same way, when we comprehend that lust is harmful, and envy is harmful, we will have not even an atom of interest in them. Instead, we will radiate virtues. Instead of lust, we will be naturally chaste, pure: still sexual, but not animal. Instead of envy, we will be naturally happy for the good that others have, rather than wanting it for ourselves.

Comprehension is reached when we naturally, spontaneously, honestly have no interest in a given defect. Instead, we spontaneously, easily, without force or effort, demonstrate the virtue instead. Rather than being angry or hateful, we feel serenity, love. Rather than indulging our gluttony, we are content and happy with being modest, refrained, taking only what we need and nothing more. Contentment, happiness, acceptance, love, [Chastity](#), tolerance, sacrifice for others, diligence, wisdom, insight, generosity, a relaxed and open state of being — these are signs of comprehension.

3. Execution

Once we have comprehended a given defect, it can be eliminated. However, one must know how to eliminate it.

Samael Aun Weor wrote,

“...with the help of the Divine Mother [Kundalini](#), through the wise practice of Sexual Super-dynamics, the [ego](#) is eliminated.” - [The Revolution of the Dialectic](#)

This is an important factor that has not been widely taught to humanity until now. So, for many generations, even though this type of knowledge has been available in different forms and different places around the world, the key has been hidden. It is easy to find teachings that talk about spiritual birth, resurrection, that talk about serving others. Sometimes you will find teachings that will talk about the death of the [ego](#) — sometimes; yet, most avoid that topic. Even amongst the ones that discuss it, they will not tell you how you actually kill it, how the [ego](#) can die. That knowledge was always restricted, and many of the schools nowadays do not even know it, even though it is in the scriptures. It is the highest of the nine yantras, the vehicles of [Tantra](#). The highest aspect, the most difficult and rarely accessed, is this knowledge. It was only given to those who through many lifetimes gradually worked their way up to receiving that teaching. So, do not be surprised if you have not heard it before.

These stages of death are talked about in [The Revolution of the Dialectic](#). If you really want to know how to die psychologically and escape suffering, this is the book you need to know very deeply and accurately. It profoundly describes the process of psychological change.

Let me back up, because I want to explain something.

The Bhava of Seeking Death

In that school of [Tantra](#) in which the process of death was taught, there is a tradition that represented the process of psychological death in a very profound form of [Tantra](#) related to Yamantaka. There are many scriptures related to that, many rituals and initiations that were all very beautiful, useful, and good. Unfortunately, most of humanity does not have access to it. Moreover, all of it came from the piscean era, which has already passed. Now we are in a new era, with new influences and forces at work.

The process of psychological death is something that we ourselves put into motion through having the right type of bhava, psychological attitude. That is an attitude that is willing to die, that wants to die as a psyche, so we can be born anew in a better state. This is not an easy attitude to cultivate. It is not easy to embrace death as a path, especially since our culture nowadays is opposed to the death of the [ego](#). In general, we have a culture that is fighting with every ounce of energy we have to avoid the death of our precious “self” at all costs. We sanitize our news so we do not see death; we avoid the reality of death.

The truth is that psychological and spiritual liberation is a process of psychologically dying many deaths; that is, the false self has to die if we are to discover what is real in us.

The stages of spiritual initiation are stages of death. With each genuine initiation, we die psychologically. In the internal worlds, the one who is awakened experiences those processes of death. John the Baptist represented this fact with his beheading. That is how the “I” is decapitated: from level to level, deeper into the psyche. With each death, a birth happens. With each death, a sacrifice happens; the three factors are unified. Physically, terrestrially, we do not have to worry about that all too much. It will happen on its own as we die psychologically. What we need to do here and now is put in motion the three stages of the process of death.



First is discovery. You cannot see the reality of things unless you are willing to recognize that you do not already see it. This is the first problem many people have; we think because we already read a book or because we heard some teaching when we were younger that we already know the truth. We do not. If we know the truth, then the proof is we are escaping suffering. If you are putting in motion the real teachings, then you are coming out of suffering. You experience genuine change. That is how you measure your knowledge, your spiritual progress. You can not measure spiritual development by having fantastical spiritual experiences. They might happen; good for you, but it is irrelevant. Most people in the Gnostic tradition have fall into this mistake. They read the beautiful writings of Samael Aun Weor and his descriptions of his many experiences, and the students think, “If I am having

experiences like him, then I am advancing.” So they compare themselves to this great master. This is wrong. Listen: even witches and black magicians have spiritual experiences. That is what drives them: they want to awaken, too. They crave awakening. Those who crave internal experiences can very easily become black magicians. Those who measure themselves and compare themselves based on internal experiences are putting themselves on the path into the abyss. Spiritual experiences are not the measure of spiritual success: the death of the [ego](#) is the real measure.

The way you measure your progress is through your death psychologically, through noticing you are changing profoundly. You should be ensuring that you are becoming less, not more. You should be ensuring that your pride is getting whittled down, and that your anger is being exposed so you can work on it. You should be confirming that your envy becomes visible so that you can see how it causes suffering. This is not easy. Nobody wants to face their anger, their envy, or their pride. Most especially, no one wants to face the reality of their lust. We want to keep that in our pocket “for later.” Real spiritual progress does not work like that.

Real spiritual progress is measured through psychological change, which only you can see, nobody else. Your family and your friends will come around and say, “Wow, you changed a lot since you have been studying [Gnosis](#).” And you will say, with a saintly aura, “I have, I sure have!” You do not even see your own pride!

You have to be able to measure your own change. You need to cultivate the ability welcome challenges, difficulties, and stop seeking comfort and praise. Real spiritual progress is not found in comfort or ease: it is found in the problems of life, in the difficulties of day to day survival, because that is how the [ego](#) is revealed. If we run to the monastery or forest, we will never, ever progress spiritually. Instead, we will sink into a deep sleep.

The nature of the grasping entity, the “I,” is that it is always seeking pleasure, praise, acceptance, praises from others, envy from others. To really advance spiritually, we have to invert that upon ourselves. Every time we find ourselves seeking something, we have to inquire into it. Even our spiritual ambition has to be analyzed, because the “I” also wants to be a master, a buddha.

We need a mirror that will show us who we really are. None of us want to see who we really are. Samael Aun Weor stated a few times very beautifully: If any of us actually saw the totality of who we are, we would go mad. We could not transform it.

Those who work seriously to awaken start to get glimpses of who they really are, and it is very uncomfortable. It is awful, actually. These images of Yamantaka and Yama do not even come close to representing the reality of the horrors we have within us. These frightening images are quite beautiful compared to what you will see in yourself, the horrors of what you have made, that are there, binding you. To liberate oneself, you have to be willing to see it, and look yourself in the eye and see the reality. That is not easy.

The myth that I explained to you about Yama and Yamantaka gives a clue. It is the essence of that tantric method. That clue is in the tantric method. In the Gnostic tradition, we do not teach this particular technique, since it comes from the Piscean era, but I will explain it so you can understand it. Those who have gone through the long process of training in Tibetan Buddhism of that particular school learn how in [Meditation](#) to imagine themselves as being Yamantaka. They imagine having the perspective of Yamantaka in order to conquer their inner Yama. They imagine themselves becoming this wrathful being in order to conquer their own [ego](#). This is a very useful example for us to understand how to approach the process of psychological death.

We also have to embrace an attitude (bhava) committed to self-criticism, self-decapitation, and to self-crucifixion. We find similar teachings throughout the genuine religions. Amongst the Christian traditions, this process of embracing death was also widespread, although now it has been abandoned. It was most known among certain monastic groups. You may have heard the phrase Memento mori, which means “Remember, you will die.” That phrase received different interpretations and usages over history, but originated from a group that knew that the process of spiritual change came through psychological death. They would remember death and dying, as a way to stimulate themselves to not feel complacent with their lust, pride, greed, envy, gluttony and laziness, and to be constantly watchful of the subtle tricks that the [ego](#) uses to keep us feeding it.

Let us move ahead, in order for us to know how to succeed in this third stage of the process of death.

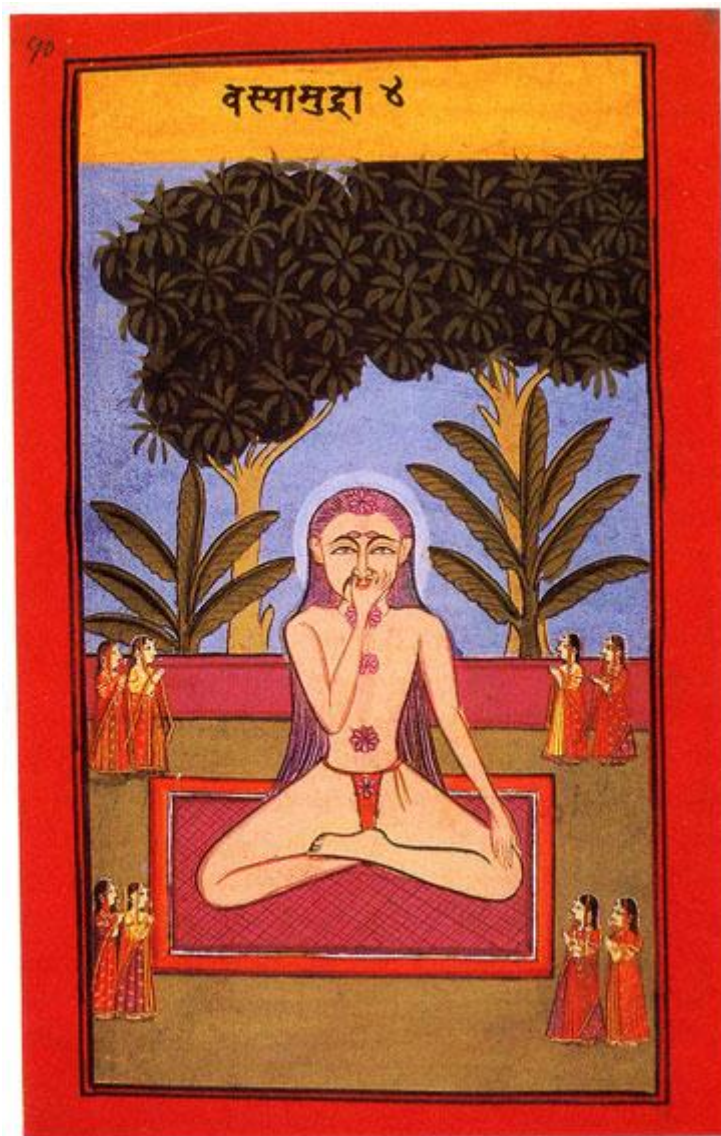
The Executioner

Once we have (1) discovered how a defect is manipulating us and causing suffering and (2) comprehended that defect — meaning it no longer attracts us or influences us — then we are ready for it to be eliminated. So, we need to know how to do it.

Firstly, the mind cannot slay itself. We need a power that is greater than the mind. We need an executioner.



We need that sword of Manjushri to decapitate the [ego](#). That sword is the [Kundalini](#). It is the fire, the energy, the intelligence of the Divine Mother, and is the embodiment of Prana in us. It is the fire of creativity of creation, the Schamayim ([Hebrew](#) : fire + water), which flows in us as Shekinah. Those are [Hebrew](#) words, if you do not know them already. That force resides in our sexual glands, but raw, undeveloped. This is why monks and nuns of all religions learn as beginners to save and restrain their sexual energy. Once trained, they learned to harness that energy and direct it towards eliminating the [ego](#). The beginners worked as singles. Once they were trained, those who were ready would enter into a relationship as a couple (man and woman) in order to harness the combined sexual forces, to combine the two polarities (male and female) and direct that energy to liberate the [Consciousness](#). This is the purpose of [Tantra](#). It is not meant to indulge in desire. It is to die, to liberate the [Consciousness](#) from its cage. Unfortunately, [Tantra](#) has been abused and misinterpreted in its propagation into the west. Now, like everything else, people only think of [Tantra](#) as a way of indulging their desires. The beginners (singles) in all the traditions would learn techniques to transform that energy. One of the most prevalent is known openly now, and in Sanskrit is called Pranayama.



This image is from Hindu [Tantra](#), and represents one variation of a practice of Pranayama. We see a yogi who is controlling the airflow in and out of his nostrils. This is a breathing technique in order to work with energy: not physical air, but Prana, the energy that is outside and inside. The primary activator of this technique is the sexual energy that the Yogi has learned to restrain. There are a lot of people around the world who are learning techniques of Pranayama, but do not learn to restrain their sexual energy, thus they are wasting their time. It is like using a bellows on a cold hearth. If there is no spark on the coals, then no fire will emerge. The spark that produces spiritual life is the same spark that produces physical life: sexual energy. Through the conservation and transmutation of sexual energy, one can awaken [Consciousness](#) rapidly. Without sexual restraint, we only have spiritual coldness.

Pranayama literally interpreted means “harness the life force.” Prana refers to life force, and Yama means to restrain or harness.

I want to point out some additional meanings here. The Sanskrit word Prana can mean “breath of life, breath, filled, full, wind, spirit, respiration, vigour, life, power, air inhaled, vital organ, vital air, myrrh, respiration, vitality, energy.” Thus, prana is spirit, exactly like Neshamah in [Hebrew](#). Remember in the book of Genesis:

“And Jehovah Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the neshamah (breath) of life; and man became a living soul.” - Genesis 2:7

This is how the soul is created. Currently, we do not have a soul; we only have the embryo of the soul. For that soul to become (bhava) we need this prana (spirit, life force, breath). We need this breath that comes into us through Elohim.

Elohim is [Hebrew](#) for [God](#) (El) and goddess (Eloah) united (thus forming Elohim; -im indicates it is a plural word). Elohim is the union of male/female. It is those two principles united in the sexual act that bring the breath of life. That is the prana that we harness in the sexual act. Prana also can mean vigor, life, power, air, vital organ, vital air, respiration, vitality, and energy etc.

Now what is interesting about this is that if you have been paying attention you will notice that the word Pranayama has Yama in it, the [God](#) of death, our own inner Yama.

Ayama means “restraining, stretching, stopping, extending, breath or length.”

If we look at that word as Prana-ayama, we see death and life, two sides of the same coin.

Pranayama could also be translated as: “breath of death, power of death, vital organ of death, vital air of death, vitality, energy of death, spirit of death.” Very interesting. What is interesting about that is that the technique of Pranayama has multiple functions.

Traditionally, there are many varieties of Pranayama, but they all boil down to simply this: one learns to visualize and imagine as one draws in the atmosphere the air through the nose and draws the sexual energy up from the sexual organs and up the spine to the brain and holds it. That is the restraint. One is taking the energy around and the energy within and pulling it all together. From this place one directs it to what needs to work on. The most common technique that is used here is that the energy is directed to the heart, to stimulate and awaken the heart, because our hearts are cold. Some versions of that technique circulate and utilize that force along with mantra while the practitioner is visualizing their [Meditation](#), visualizing the defect that needs to be destroyed or needs to be understood.

The energy that is being harnessed is a vital force to empower the imagination and give us insight, and are symbolized by the flames that wrap around the sword of Manjushri. The sexual energy — when harnessed, transmuted, refined — awakens the [Consciousness](#) and give us discriminative awareness, in order to cut through illusion and see reality.

Thus, Pranayama is used as a technique to help with the comprehension of the [ego](#). Pranayama is also used for the execution of the defect. This technique is very important. In this tradition, we teach several different varieties.

This image is Yamantaka as Elohim: [God](#) and goddess united.



In that tradition of tantric Buddhism that is related to Yamantaka, the practitioners would visualize themselves as being Yamantaka, and do practices types of Pranayama, and while breathing combined with mantras, visualize themselves as this entity conquering their [ego](#). What is all this under the feet? The egos, our own egos, the many defects that we have. What are these heads on the necklace? Those are the beheaded I's that must die in us. What are the serpents? They are the serpents that entwine on our spinal column. What are the many eyes on the many heads of Yamantaka? It is all seeing perception that sees in all directions and sees all things and is not confused. In all, this image represents how the sexual energies are united, harnessed, and transformed to help us destroy the [ego](#). The fire of course is the sexual energy that inflames the process and brings light into the darkness.

Energy in Motion

As we explained in the previous lectures, the process of the Bhavachakra is an ever-turning cycle, which is our own mind. That continual turning of the wheel is our experience from moment to moment. In the west, it is represented by the symbol of infinity. That sign of infinity over the body represents the continual flow of energy through our [three brains](#). We are continually experiencing thoughts, feelings, and sensations in the body, without any real awareness of where they are, where they come from, and where they go, and ultimately, what they are producing.

That process of energy in motion is symbolized in Tibetan Buddhism as a vajra, which means thunderbolt.



It is the same thunderbolt used by Indra and Zeus. It is the power that the inner Being has to conquer the demon, to wield the power of the [God](#).

That power is in us. It is in our [three brains](#), but we misuse it. We are always misusing the brain, the heart, and the sexual organs. We use them to feed desire, to chase pleasure and fool ourselves with our many illusions. We constantly grasp an entity that is not real. We need to learn to invert that, and sacrifice that, and instead become our own enemy and seek to conquer ourselves, and deny the [ego](#) its food, and deny pride, and deny anger, and deny envy, and instead affirm the Buddha inside. To learn to just be instead of always wanting, that power can be utilized. We can have this power in our hands in order to liberate ourselves, and ultimately be of benefit to others.

What is interesting is that as a single person, that is a great deal of power to have. Look back in history and you can find individuals who utilized their power effectively for the benefit of others. Singles can make enormous changes and help many people. Every one of us has that ability, but we simply do not want to. If we choose to do it, we can.

However, if we work together, the power is even greater. This image is of Vajrasattva.



Vajra is that thunderbolt, and Sattva is “being” or “essence of.” This image is Vajra-sattva united: man and women. Father and Mother. [God](#) and Goddess. In [Hebrew](#) it is called Elohim. This is a union in purity, united by love. Real love is a rejection of lust, a denial of pride, a conquering of envy, a dispersal of fear. It is an irradiating example of the creative power of the gods, something we can imitate, and something that can empower tremendous change. This is the great secret protected in all religions and ancient mystical traditions: sexual cooperation, which is real [Chastity](#).



This Vajra cross represents the union of those forces, how the monk and [Nun](#) would stop being monk and [Nun](#) and become husband and wife, priest and priestess, in order to go faster, further, deeper, in fighting the [ego](#), and awakening. That is why on the cross above Jesus it says INRI: In Necis Renascor Integer: “In death I am reborn intact and pure.” This image of Yamantaka represents how the cross of man and woman harnesses those forces to liberate the [Consciousness](#) from the [ego](#). All of these mysteries are hidden there.

In synthesis, there are two ways to approach the process of death: whether as a single person, or as a couple. The single person can harness the sexual forces and form that cross in themselves through their own work inside. The cross of death. Alone, they can only accomplish so much; i.e. just as a single person cannot have a child, so a single person needs a partner to perform greater works. A single persons energy only has so much power. The power to create life, the power to bring life into this world, is the power of the man and woman working together. That same power can be harnessed and utilized to purge the mind of all of its defects completely. That is the mystery that is hidden in all the ancient traditions. We should emulate this example of Yamantaka to show death to its self, in order to conquer it.

Questions and Answers

Audience: In the book [...] says you should not set your mind as a battleground and we are anger, we are hatred, we are also love and kindness. Talks about how anger helps out like taking a baby from a crib, dear one I know you are there, dear one I am here for you. [On the other hand], Shantideva sets the mind back on to itself and battles it and transforms the person. Is there something missing?

Instructor: The first example you gave is from a teacher who teaches sutrayana level Buddhist teachings. Those are the foundational level teachings, which are the introductory stages, where the student is learning firstly how to utilize the [Consciousness](#) to maintain constant awareness. They utilize working with karma, and learning about impermanence and the inevitability of death. In that level of work, the student is not yet prepared for the difficulties of dealing with the full power of the illusions, delusions, and defects we have within, so they are taught to work in a non-confrontational, gentle manner. The practice you are describing is of that class of teaching.

The second example you gave appears to contradict it, in which the person does battle against the elements of the mind in a more direct, confrontational way. The approach described by Shantideva is related to the Mahayana level, which is the next grade up from the first. In that second level of instruction, the student should already have formed the foundational level understanding — that is, they already know how to be cognizant and awake from moment to moment, they already understand the process of karma and the inevitability of death. Therefore, they are better prepared to maintain a steadfast self-awareness as they engage in battle against the [ego](#).

So, here you have presented two different stages of work: first is preparation for battle, and second is the entrance into battle.

Today's lecture is from the third level of instruction, the tantrayana level, in which the student already has the foundational level — they have the understanding of the basics, such as they know how to be continually aware of themselves and not lose and become distracted. They also know how to engage in battle based on the Mahayana level, which includes the longing to help others; in other words, the student is developing Bodhichitta. Once this process is in motion and they can sustain it, they need to go faster, they need to work harder, go deeper, so then the tantrayana level is introduced to them, in which the student actually becomes the enemy (Yama). That is, the student no longer sees the [ego](#) or defect as separate from them. They see they are the Being, and they are the devil, and through the development of wisdom (prajna), they learn to see the fundamental truth of this apparent contradiction, in order to free themselves of false notions of self. This, of course, requires the disintegration of the defects.

In the earlier levels, the student views themselves as, “I am me over here, and you are the [ego](#) over there.” In the middle level, the student starts to understand, “I am going to engage in this battle against my defects, but ultimately both of us are empty.” In the third level of instruction, the student sees, “I am no different then the [ego](#). We are both empty. I am that [ego](#), and I am going to die. Only the Absolute is real.” Do you see how they are different? Each level of instruction is different.

In the Gnostic tradition, because this is a new era, we teach all three levels together. It depends on the level of the student what they can use of it. In the lectures, in the books, we jump back and forth between these stages, because it depends on which aspect of the doctrine we are addressing. The tricky part for the student is they have to be able to gauge what they are capable of, and not overdo it. That is why when I am explaining the lectures, I try to keep those distinctions clear. You need to first build the foundation. You need to first learn how to observe, how to be consistent and not forget, to be here and now and present, never forgetting. That can only be developed if you are working all day long, and also practicing [Meditation](#) every day. Little by little you develop that capacity of concentration so that you do not forget you are here and now in the body. From that stage, those deeper techniques can really be utilized effectively. Previous to that, they are only confusing. That is why in today's lecture I was giving an overview, but not going too deep into the details on how to do each part. Each student

has to gauge that. That book [The Revolution of the Dialectic](#) beautifully outlines these things, but he is much more cryptic than I am. He is a master.

Audience: In Egypt the twins, Horus and Seth. Seth is the [God](#) of death and my question is you said with Anubis and John the Baptist them being related the one who gets decapitated, how does this relate to this Buddhist teaching?

Instructor: All the Egyptian symbols are reflections of these same symbols. They are all pointing at archetypes that are inside of you. The real question is: who are you in relation to them? Which type of archetype are you reflecting in your day-to-day life? Horus or Seth? We are all being Seth, betraying Horus, vying for power. We all need to change that. We need the help of Anubis. We need the help of Yamantaka, or John the Baptist or whichever symbol you want to apply there. The symbols are really irrelevant. It is just symbolic. It is like believing a flag is the country. They are not the same thing. What matters most is a deep and constant self-reflection. Asking yourself, “Am I changing, or am I not?”

Audience: In the bigger picture are we intellectual animals one of the slivers of multi-faceted aspects of Yamantaka?

Instructor: We as intellectual animals are Yama. We are our own process of death. We as a [Consciousness](#), as a Being — a part of us that we do not know — are Yamantaka. This final image is Yamantaka, our Being. In order for us to conquer the [ego](#) we need to become a reflection of that. The only way to achieve that is to cut through the illusion of the intellectual animal, cut through our illusion of what we think we are, who we think we are. We need to learn to be. To awaken. To learn to see. To develop the type of discriminative perception that is so powerful that we literally start to peel away the veils. Anybody can do that.

This is not a game. This is not philosophical debate. These teachings are not a joke. This science is a way to awaken [Consciousness](#). To awaken [Consciousness](#) means to develop perception. Different perception. You will actually see. It will not be like in movies. It will not be like in comic books or books of fantasy and all of that stuff. It is not like that. It is another way of seeing. It is a way of restoring the natural state of [Consciousness](#), which is a form of perception.

Do not confuse the symbols, the paintings, the drawing, the terms, the names the mythologies with the facts. Work with the facts. The facts are: we are here, we are now, we are asleep. We are trapped and bound in suffering. There is a way out. The way out is to awaken. It is not through memorizing mythologies and comparing symbols and studying graphics. The way is through awakening. The way to truly awaken is to die psychologically. It is to kill your pride. When pride comes up, do not protect it. When your lust comes up, do not avoid it, do not protect it and do not indulge in it; instead, see it. See it for what it is: a form of suffering. Only then — when you see that reality — will you want to escape lust, pride, envy, etc. Then, the way to escape it is to see how the cage was built. We need to see every joint, every connection of the cage, then to learn to start cutting them. To stop feeding it, nourishing it and making it stronger and instead to start breaking it down. That is how you do it. You do not need to remember any of these symbols, any of these names. Any of it. Forget it. Symbols will not save you. What will liberate you is to escape from your pride. Come out of it; discard it like the way the serpent discards the skin. We need to escape pride, anger, envy, gluttony, fear, greed, and laziness, all of it. They have to die. They are not our real self. They are self-created illusions.

Audience: What would you suggest to do when the [Consciousness](#) gets tired from intense self-observation?

Instructor: Relax. Rest. The student in the beginning needs a great deal of willpower to develop self-observation, because that skill is weak in us. Like any muscle, when you start to exercise, it is very hard at first. You might be very enthusiastic for the first week or two, and then you go to the gym everyday and work out, or do your two hours of [Meditation](#) everyday, but two weeks into it you are wiped out. You are burned out already. The intelligent and balanced way to approach it is to relax. Do not stop, but do not push yourself to exhaustion. Be balanced. Work within your limits.

In Tibetan Buddhism, there are paintings that show the development of concentration practice, the stages of concentration. Those paintings show a great fire at the beginning of the path. As the student ascends higher on that path, that fire gets smaller and smaller. That fire represents the degree of intensity that the student needs in order to develop continuity of [Consciousness](#). In the beginning, it takes a lot of force. That is tiring. The way to accomplish it is to do it in little packets. Work on it, then rest. Meditate for ten or twenty minutes, then relax. You know you are going to get tired, so relax. Do not stop paying attention, but relax. Then keep trying, and then relax. Trying and relaxing. This is how you do it in a balanced way.

A problem for many beginners as they learn to meditate and self-observe is that as they start learning they become tense. We have that urgency that wants to learn and wants to get it right, and get it right from the beginning. (That is really pride, just in case you didn't realize it.) That urgency creates tension; the urgency to succeed, to look like we know what we are doing, the fear of failing, the desire for success, etc. all create tension. What we really need to do is be relaxed.

Genuine self-observation is the same as a good state of relaxation. Be here and now. Someone who is really able to observe themselves is not tense. If you are tense, then you are really not paying attention. Physical tension is a sign of mental tension, some kind of resistance in the mind and in the heart. When you feel tense physically, emotionally, or mentally, that means you are not noticing something psychologically about yourself. You did not transform some impression. You are either resisting something or grasping something psychologically, and that reflects in us physically. Learn to relax.

Audience: Is it safe to assume that you are not heading into the right direction if your life is full of joy, in essence without suffering?

Instructor: What we have to understand is our life is a reflection of our karma. Someone who is experiencing a life full of joy needs to analyze that joy. Is it real joy? Is it lasting joy? Is it joy that is based on some type of materialistic state? If our joy is because we have a good family and we have money in the bank and we have decent health, you are fooling yourself, because none of those things will last. If you could be poverty stricken, have no food, and no money, no family or friends, and be totally joyful and happy, then we can talk about that. You might be doing the right thing. The natural state of the [Consciousness](#) is the state of joyfulness that does not depend on anything else. It is a state of absolute serenity of peace and love. It does not depend on getting praise. It doesn't care about getting blamed. It doesn't care if it is rich or poor, sick or healthy. The natural state of the mind simply is. Unfortunately, we lost touch with that. When you learn to self observe and learn to meditate, you start to get in touch with it. That is what empowers you to go forward.

On that note, I want to point out something about the process of self-observation, [Meditation](#), and elimination of the [ego](#).

Embracing death and the idea of seeking to die psychologically can sound very morbid. It is not. It is actually beautiful and joyful. We need to understand how that is, because unfortunately, with the mind that we have now, we can misinterpret the teachings.

In some traditions, the priest or lamas would wear bones and use human bones in the rituals.

Westerners see that and are horrified, and think it is black magic — sometimes, it is. Yet, the genuine meaning of that tradition is profoundly reverential, and to show we ourselves are empty, and the cycle of life and death is an illusion. Those lamas are showing what the paintings of John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene represent, when you see them with a skull: they are meditating on the impermanence of things. Comprehending that impermanence leads one to freedom from mundane concerns, and freedom from fear of death.

We will all die. We all died before, and we will die again. Life is a constant process of change. When you really come to terms with that, you become free from that fear of death. Moreover, you can also take advantage of it, and utilize it to benefit yourself and others. Then, Death is not a fearful thing; rather, it becomes a source of change.

Psychologically speaking, in relation to self-observation and [Meditation](#), we need to understand that. The Gnostic tradition from the guidance of Samael Aun Weor focuses intensely on the death of the [ego](#). This is necessary. Students who are new and even old ones read the books and become very morbid. They think, “This is all about death, and it is so depressing; it is so hateful and angry.” They do not understand the philosophical point of view, which is not hateful, angry, or morbid. It is liberating.

If you approach your practice solely as, “My [ego](#) must die,” and this is your constant perspective, you will indeed become morbid, because it is only one of the three factors; thus, because you have not worked in balance, eventually you will abandon this type of work. That death-focused approach on its own will not render the type of change that we need. We need the unity of the three factors: Birth, Death and Sacrifice.

As an example, let us imagine that you are working on a defect of anger, and you had some experience during the day that really made you mad. You went through that experience with some degree of awareness and thus were able to see all of that anger in yourself, and all of the emotional, mental and physical information related to it. Then you go home to meditate. You relax; you do your prayers and your mantras, and then meditate and visualize that event to understand it better. Then, you become angry again, and are unable to release the attachment to the anger. There is a danger there that you can fall into, in which you strengthen the anger rather than weaken it. Some people fall into this tendency,

with various egos; obviously, it is difficult to visualize those scenes without becoming identified with them again. It is not easy to separate oneself and cognitantly do battle with the defect, and overcome it.

A great antidote is to use a psychological mirror. When you observe the scene, you have to use a kind of inner mirror against yourself, and show yourself how ugly you are when you are angry. Rather than seeing the scene from the same point of view you had when you experienced it first, change the point of view to a view from outside of yourself, and see yourself in that scene: see how ugly you are when anger controls you. See how ugly that anger is, and how it will only produce suffering. Then, turn the scene around: imagine that scene as it should have happened, had you brought virtue rather than a defect into it. Imagine that anger is replaced by love. Anger is the inverse of love. Anger is just hate; it wants others to suffer. If you look at how anger motivates us, we want others to suffer the way that we suffered. Convert that anger. Ask yourself, “How would I handle that event if I were to show love instead of anger?” You need to meditate on both sides of the defect, not just the side that shows the anger, but you also need to see what would be the virtue, what would be the right behavior. How would you behave if that defect were its opposite? In this way, while comprehending the costs and ugliness of each defect, you come to see the benefits of the virtues. Thus, you do not become morbid, dark, bitter. Instead, you can see there is hope. If you only focus on the dark side of yourself, you will really start to become self-defeatist, morbid, and frowning all the time, and nobody will want to be around you. All the [Gnostics](#) complain, “I lost all of my friends.” You might. Yet, hopefully you will gain better ones. It is important to have balance in our practice and see both sides.

Audience: In doing the work the at times the energy becomes so great that it explodes usually in a negative way to pride, anger, lust etc. How do we avoid these explosions when becoming overwhelmed by the extra energy that we stored up? But rather direct slowly and steadily into a positive stream that feeds rather than consumes.

Instructor: The question in essence is: How can we avoid explosions of negative energy as we work through our day-to-day practice?

The only way to conquer this phenomenon is through experience. It is natural for all students to experience states that we are unable to transform. We are beginners. We are not yet good at transforming impressions and handling the diverse experiences in day to day life. It is normal and natural for us — given our current state — to repress things, avoid things, and indulge in things, and thus make ourselves suffer. For someone who is experiencing a sudden explosion of anger or lust or envy, it is because up to that point they were repressing something and avoiding something. They were unable to transform the impressions that led up to that build up of energy. For lust, for example there is a lot of energy tied up in our lust. If we are not constantly and consistently aware of ourselves, we are constantly building up storage of untransformed impressions, and eventually it will come out. Lust is especially dangerous, and can explode as other defects, such as anger, depression, etc.

The techniques of this tradition are not easy; especially in the first few years it is very difficult, because our preexisting habits express energy in harmful ways. In the beginning, when we first learn to conserve energy, instead everybody represses it; it is difficult for a beginner to understand the difference between conserving and repressing. When you repress something, you put it under pressure. You put it aside and sit on it, and try to pack it into something it should not be in. Energy needs to move, it needs to be utilized. Ultimately, repressed energy will explode out. It will explode out as lust, anger, envy pride etc. This happens to everyone.

The way to avoid these types of explosions is to understand more and more about being constantly aware, watching oneself, and transforming impressions. Of course, it is necessary to do your practices so that the energies are transformed; do pranayama, [Sexual Magic](#) — whatever practice you are able to do. Naturally, you must be transmuting your energy everyday. Learn to transform that energy. Nevertheless, if you have such explosions, then you should be watching yourself carefully, and meditating every day. Reflect upon what led up to that event; the only way you will stop them from happening is by discovering the psychological causes, which can only be found by self-observation and subsequent [Meditation](#). You might be surprised by what you find; speculating and guessing will not find the answer. You need facts. So, this is how we learn to change. It is painful, but it is the only way.

Audience: [inaudible]

Instructor: The Master Samael Aun Weor wrote in the book [Aztec Christic Magic](#) that we need to cultivate the habit of being happy. I think that is an important statement. It is very easy to become dark when we analyze ourselves, because we see so many problems. When you are observing yourselves, and you are trying to meditate everyday, the amount of information you gather becomes

overwhelming. Students always ask, “How can I only pick one [ego](#), because I see so many egos?” The answer is to meditate on what happened that day. Just meditate as much as you can. If you cannot get through everything that happened, start with the important ones that resonate in your heart and are the most important; meditate on those. If you are one of those “lucky people” (I am joking) who doesn’t find an [ego](#) that day, you need to pay attention more. You need to look more. Look the day before or the day before that. You will find things that need to be worked on.

As far as how to sustain the work and have a joyful attitude, this emerges through the transformation of impressions. The problem that can happen when we are working so much on the [ego](#) is that it can become very much about “me.” As in, “I” am working on “my” [ego](#). “My” pride is so bad “I” am overwhelmed. That defeatist, morbid, frustrated state is pride. Recognize that. Instead of having that attitude, work with a sense of indifference. None of us have an egotistical reaction to brushing our teeth. We just brush them because they need brushing. Our [Meditation](#) should be the same. We meditate because we must. Not because we are bad or good, but because we need it. I hope your practice reaches that point where you realize [Meditation](#) is not something that is optional, rather it is like eating a meal, and you need it to continue to go on. You come to the realization that you need [Meditation](#), and you look forward to meditating.

In those times when you feel deflated, defeated, or despondent, or those negative emotional states, it is okay to pause in the psychological work in order to rejuvenate oneself and restore your equilibrium. I would suggest that you meditate on your Being and pray. Visualize how incredibly beautiful the Being is. Work with that as an antidote. Not only that, but see the Being in every other person. When you really start to come out of your cage (where it is all about “me”) and you see that your Being is amazing, beautiful, and you realize, “Hey, he has that inside, too; she has that, too.” There is a chance for that to be revealed in everyone. That should give us a lot of energy and a lot of hope. We need to find those types of antidotes.

For myself, when I find myself getting into those states, I start again as a beginner. I generally do that anyway when I sit to meditate. I do not sit to meditate as if I know what I am doing, because I really do not. I sincerely do not think I know what I am doing. When I sit to meditate, I start from zero, knowing nothing. I have an attitude of, “Where am I? Who am I? What am I doing here? What can I do to change it?” I test the principles of [Meditation](#) practice. I go through the steps of [Meditation](#) stage by stage, and I test the principles. That has helped me to be practical, and experience results.

Instead of falling into that state, we need to find antidotes.

Audience: How often do you suggest practicing Pranayama? Also is it true you can experience the sexual energy through the chakras by visualizing it rising up?

Instructor: One can practice pranayama as much as one wants. It is similar to breathing. One needs to breathe. Pranayama is a type of breath combined with visualization and mantra in order to transform energy. The sexual energy is constantly being produced in the body, not only physically but vitally, and so that energy is always building. The more effectively you work to transform energy, the more you can keep it under control. For pranayama, you can do it as much as you like. For [Sexual Magic](#), it is another story: at the most, once per day.

Is it true that you can raise the sexual energy through visualization? Yes. It is true. In order to do that, first you have to have energy available. If you save it, you can raise it. With experience and with practice, you will be able to verify that for yourself. It is not an illusion, it is something you can experience.

Audience: If a person has not learned how to truly meditate and are a beginner and are going through these stages of death, if you haven’t reached that level and are starting from the beginning do you go through it in a superficial way in the level that you are able to see it?

Instructor: The beginner always begins where the beginner is. The stages still apply. Someone who is beginning in these studies and is working to observe themselves and gather information about the [ego](#) and is conserving their sexual energy in order to defeat those egos can defeat egos relative to the amount of energy and comprehension they have acquired: meaning, at the level of a beginner. The reach and power of that energy will naturally be shallow, but there is still progress that can be made. The more you develop, the deeper you can go. Each of us can only work on those egos that we can perceive. For the beginner, that is of course only what is being perceived from the physical body. That is the most superficial level. If you really want to get into the depths of the mind, you need to learn how to meditate. By [Meditation](#) I mean to awaken [Consciousness](#) and perceive other dimensions. Anyone can do that. The [Consciousness](#) in itself has that capability. We have to develop it, awaken it, and restore it.

A single person who works very rigorously, with a lot of dedication, meditating hours a day, dedicating all of their energy towards this work, can in a due course eliminate a huge percentage of their [ego](#), but not the entirety of it. They can become what we might call “a saint.” But, they cannot become what we call “a Buddha.” To reach that level, you have to work with a partner in sexual cooperation, because that is the only way you can cultivate the vessels that reflect the radiance and wisdom of a Buddha, and therefore penetrate deeper into the [ego](#). Like everything else in nature, the work occurs in stages.

The bottom line is: start where you are, work to the best of your ability, and work to go deeper. Learn to meditate. [Meditation](#) is absolutely essential. Without [Meditation](#), this work cannot be accomplished. Those who do not learn to meditate always remain on the surface, in the shallowest regions.

- < Previous: [Spiritual Birth](#)

<https://gnosticteachings.org/courses/bhavachakra-the-wheel-of-becoming/3407-mystical-death.html>